

HAPPINESS THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF LIFE

By : Dr.SANAT TRIVEDI

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Preface for the book 'happiness the ultimate goal of life'

Gita and Vedanta are two main pillars of Hindu philosophy. As per Hindu philosophy there are three main ways for achieving ultimate goal of life. These are Gnan, Karma, and Bhakti. The school of thought, which believes in the Gnan Marga, is known as Sankhya. Shree Kapilmuni was the founder of Sankhya Darshan. As per the doctrine of Sankhya philosophy, true knowledge of self and that of universal self, ultimately leads to liberation from all the miseries of life.

Gita, Vedanta, and Sankhya Darshan, are the books which are written in Sanskrit language. It is not easy for average man to read and understand its contents. Even underlying philosophy is hard to be imbibed by the common person. With the result the average common man can never be benefited with the knowledge stored in these valuable philosophical books. With the view to make it more simpler and digestible, this book is written.

This book is the transformation of ancient Hindu philosophical teaching into modern logical, scientific, and rational thinking.

The book contains the knowledge which is simpler, practical and easily understandable. We have tried to analyze the principles and ancient philosophy described in those books in the light of our medical knowledge. Being doctors, we can visualize and understand human mental turbulences, which ultimately leads to mental disturbances and

unhappy life. This book is the synthesis of ancient philosophy, modern logical thinking and medical knowledge.

The book 'Happiness the ultimate goal of life' contains four sections. The first section deals with philosophy and objective of life. Human life is at the top on the ladder of evolution. So it may have different and higher goal of life as compared to animal life. But unfortunately there is no unanimous concurrence for the ultimate goal of human life. However our common sense agrees to believe that each human being tries to be happy in life.

The first section describes various view points and theories regarding the philosophy and goal of life. It analyzes manifold perceptions of life and its ultimate goal.

The second section deals with the subject of happiness. If ultimate aim of life is happiness, then one should know and understand the subject in more detail. Happiness is analyzed in this section as a thesis. As the happiness is purely mental feeling, one should understand complexity of human mind. With the result section three is devoted for analyzing human mind. Human mind is the seat of all the feelings, desires and expectations of life. Desires and expectations are the prime factors, which are responsible for happiness or unhappiness in life. If human mind is understood in its entirety

then it is possible to discipline the mind in such a way that it can lead to happy and peaceful life.

The section four deals with the subject of various ways of achieving mental discipline. Yoga is nothing but deconditioning and reconditioning of the mind. Patanjali's Rajyoga teaches step by step, how to train and transform the mind so that ultimately it achieves the ultimate goal of happiness.

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Philosophy of Life

1] What is Life?

Philosophy of life implies the ‘over all values by which one lives’. It is the central idea or the main theme around which all our life activities revolve. Life is the continuous journey which starts at the time of birth and ends at the time of death. Nobody knows about the mode of life before birth and mode of life after death. In GITA life is described in the following words;

‘BEINGS UNMANIFEST IN THE BEGINNING, and UNMANIFEST AGAIN IN THE END, THEY SEEM TO BE ONLY MANIFEST IN THE MIDDLE.’

It means all living beings are un-manifest before birth and un-manifest after death. Existence and exact location of a person is not known before his birth and after his death. Manifested middle part of being is the life perceived between the two points of birth and death. As per the Hindu philosophy, Atman, popularly known as soul is eternal. Being eternal it never dies. *Atman* requires physical body for its own manifestation. *Atman* manifests itself in the form of life at the time of birth and again un-manifests at the time of death. Even if one presumes that life persists before birth and even after death, he is not aware of it nor does he have any control over shaping that life as per his own wish. He can only decide

the pattern of his life and the mode of his journey between the two points of birth and death.

If this is the case then one may ask the question, whether it is possible to cast the life in any definite structure? Is it possible to lead the life as per a person's own desire? The answer is 'yes'. One can decide the mode of his own life, that is, one can decide the nature of his own life journey. One can plan his own life as per his own aspirations.

Life, A stage drama

As per the opinion of the great dramatist Shakespeare, life is nothing but a stage drama. And man is the main actor, who plays the act on the real life-stage. He enters the stage at the time of birth, performs his desired role during life time, and leaves the stage at the time of death. In the ordinary stage drama the actor is supposed to play the act as per the script written by the drama writer. In life drama there is no script writer other than the actor himself. In the drama of life, the actor has to write his own script and direct his own play. Most of the people are not aware of their own life script. They do not know the importance of writing the script, with the effect; they perform aimless acting on the stage and leave the stage without any achievement. As they have not written their life script, their role on the stage becomes routine and traditional. There is nothing new and exciting in their role.

Their vision of life is limited to the old traditional ways of life.

Most of the people are not aware of their own desires, expectations and ambitions. Their life is affected and led by surrounding environment. They lead a traditional life. They don't swim for reaching to desired goal, but they aimlessly float on the water. The direction and speed of their life journey is decided by wind of existing society. They live their life as per the norms fixed by the family or society. As soon as the child attains certain age, he is supposed to go to the school and study traditional subjects. These are the same subjects which were studied by his father, grand father and fore-father. The aim of study is not to get knowledge but it is with the sole purpose of getting good job or promising career in the future. Once the study is over, he starts earning for a better livelihood. He also selects a suitable partner and gets married. Then he produces children and rears them as per the family traditions. He earns more money and receives social recognitions. He spends most of his life time for running after more money and getting more prestige. Gradually he attains old age. He retires from active life and awaits final destination. He teaches the same life style to his children, who, in turn teach the same to their children.

These are all set traditions and set roles of life-drama. This is known as *Ghatana- charka* by Hindu philosophy. *Ghatana-chakra* means

traditionally determined circular paths for life where same events are repeated at regular intervals. Majority of the people are the followers of these traditional paths. Their life-scripts are not written by themselves but it is written by their families or their societies. They blindly follow the script handed over to them by their ancestors. They are not aware of their own desires and expectations from life. With the result at the end of life they get a feeling of emptiness. They feel that their whole life is wasted without any remarkable achievements. There are numerous examples of very rich and so called successful people, that they had feeling of emptiness at the fag-end of their lives. They felt that their whole life time is wasted for achieving materialistic success, which was insignificant in the long run. The success they achieved could not bring meaning to their lives; with the result they perceive their lives as meaningless. This is because they have followed the traditional path. They adopted the parameters of success which were fixed by the society. They have not led their lives as per their own desires and expectations. They have not played the life drama as per their own scripts. They have not selected their own route of travel. But it was selected by somebody else. They have traveled on the same road on which their fathers, grand fathers and fore fathers have traveled. They neglected their own desire to travel on some unknown road. With the result they realized at the end of their lives that

whatever they have achieved was not their real aim of life.

2] What is the aim of life?

There can not be common aim of life for every individual because it depends upon individual desires and aspirations life which are unique for each person. So the person himself has to decide his aim of life as per his desires and expectations of life. As per the universal rule, one who is born his death is certain. Death is certainty, only the date of one's death is not known. Life is the journey; where one has to travel from the point of birth to the point of death. Life can be visualized as a journey which starts at birth and terminates at death. Each person has to perform this journey. The journey can be as long as 100 years or as short as a few minutes after birth. The person is not aware of the total journey time. So he can not plan for the time of journey. But the person can plan for the purpose of life and the mode of his journey. Purpose of life means aim of life. Mode of journey means the methods for achieving the aim of life. The aim of life depends upon the personal desires and expectations.

Desires and expectations

Desires and expectations are two main factors that are responsible for shaping our life. Because of these two factors the person remains busy through out his life. It is very difficult to find a

person who has no desires and expectations. As per Hindu philosophy desire-less mind is the ideal status for spiritual life. But it is very difficult for an ordinary person to achieve that ideal goal. It is very difficult for a person to live a life without desires. Desires can be for getting wealth, or for living a luxurious life, or for gaining political power, or for having high social status. *Desires depend upon the expectations from life, and expectations depend upon the concept of life, concept of life depends upon the perception of life.*

Perception of life

Perception is visualizing the object or event, and interpreting it logically. Perception of life means visualizing the life in totality and interpreting it rationally. Human life is multifaceted and multicolored. It is so immense, vast and diversified that it is difficult to perceive it fully with available sensory organs and limited mental capacity. In fact most of the people perceive only certain aspects of life. Positive minded people perceive the brighter side of it, while the negativists perceive the dark side of it. Those who perceive the brighter side, consider it to be totally bright, full of good events and good people. Those who perceive the dark side of it, consider it to be totally dark, full of unhappy events and bad people. As such life is neither totally bright nor totally dark, neither totally white nor totally black. There are numerous grey shades between absolute white and absolute black color. It is the

mixture of good and bad people, happy and unhappy events.

Aim of life depends upon the perception of life by an individual. For some life can be a meaningless time pass. It can be the journey without any destination. For some it can be an invaluable time period awarded by the creator. For some life is meant to achieve great wealth, power and prestige in the society. While for some it is meant for serving mankind. For some it is meant for the realization of God. While for some it is meant for achieving peace and tranquility of mind. There exist numerous ideas regarding aims and objectives of life because no one can perceive life as a whole in its unique totality. Whatever one perceives is either a key-hole perception or colored perception or both. With the effect their concept is either imperfect or faulty. Each one perceives only certain facets of life and interprets it as per his mental attitude and past experiences. The person, who is born and brought up among thieves, will think that the whole world is full of thieves. And nobody is trust worthy in life. He can survive and be happy only if he learns the art of pick pocketing and theft. His aim of life will be to become an expert thief. On the other hand the person, who is brought up in an honest and god fearing family, will see the world full of honest people and will believe that every person, he comes in contact with, is trust worthy. His aim of life will always be to do some honest business and lead a peaceful life. Both of

them may be right in their own way, even though they widely differ in their aims of life. This is because their perception of life is incomplete and faulty. Everything in life depends on the way we perceive and conceive various objects and events in the life. Pure and rational perception of life gives the person true and precise vision for the life, which ultimately leads to definite aim of life.

The person, who perceives the life as the platform for mere physical enjoyment, will envisage his future life as road to physical enjoyment only. His aim in the life will be to get maximum wealth by which he can enjoy all the luxuries of life. The person, who believes in re-incarnation and theory of *Karma*, will perceive life as the platform for collecting more and more *Punya*, which can be en-cashed for getting better life after death.

The person, who perceives the life as aimless time-pass, will have no expectations from life. He will not have any desires for collecting wealth for spending luxurious life nor will he have desires for crediting fabulous amount of *Punya* for having better life after death. He will be contented with available resources and surroundings. He will not create any future vision for better life because whoever he is and whatever he possesses will be best for him. He will walk on the road of life as mere spectator. He will never be worried regarding future aims and objectives of life. He will simply enjoy walking on the road of life and enjoy beautiful weather.

Expectations are generated from the future vision of life. And desires grow and flourish from the seed of expectations.

3] Desires and aims of life

Desires are mainly responsible for molding individual life. The person spends most of his life time and energy for fulfilling various desires. Desire may be as trifle as visiting hotel for testing good food, or as Himalayan as conquering the whole world. In childhood the child has the desire of getting toys. The child gets pleasure when his desire is fulfilled. In the adult life the same desire takes the shape of getting wealth and power. The person gets same pleasure, which he was experiencing in the childhood, while getting toys of wealth and power. In broader sense wealth and power, are modified toys for the adult. In later age the same desire is modified to get higher social status and prestige in the society.

Personal desires and expectations are influenced by number of factors like family culture, society norms, religion and mental attitude.

Family culture

Family is the immediate environment through which the child learns most of his lessons. Effect of family culture is very high on the mental development of the child. The child born in a

religious family will tend to be religious, while a child from a business class family will be more materialistic. The desires and expectations of the life are also affected by the family culture. In most of the cases the child selects the family profession. In a doctor's family the child desires to be a doctor. While in a lawyer's family the child prefers to be a lawyer. The child of a farmer will choose to be a farmer and the child of a soldier will prefer to join the army, so family culture affects profoundly for selecting the aim of life.

Society norms

The second factor which influences the desires and ultimately the aim of life is society norms. Each society has its own norms. Each society fixes its own set of parameters for recognizing and awarding importance and status to the individual. These norms vary from society to society and within the same society from time to time. For example in the ancient period, in Indian society educated persons were highly respected. Even rulers were giving respect to the *Pundits and Rishis*. There were great universities like Nalanda, and Taksha-shila, where the students were taught various subjects. In those days it was a dream of each child to get admission in such a university to get mastery in various subjects. The aim of life for the child was to learn and to be a great pundit. In the Middle Ages bravery was respected by the society. Each mother will dream and expect her son to be a great soldier who can fight for his mother land. In modern society

wealth and riches are the parameters for measuring success in life. Rich gets more respect than educated in modern society. In today's materialistic world money is a great power. Today the aim of life for the growing child is to be rich and enjoy a comfortable and a luxurious life.

Religion

The third factor which influences the aim of life is the religion of the person. Religion not only influences the aim of life but it influences the way of life. Religious philosophy not only influences the individual but it also influences the whole society. There are persons dedicate their whole life for the purpose of religious activities. Holy Scriptures and religious stories can influence personal decisions regarding the aim of life.

Mental attitude

Every individual is born with specific mental attitude or mental qualities. Some people are very active and intelligent from birth. Some people are having very strong aptitude for getting knowledge while others are interested in getting more and more wealth. Mental attitude of the person affects their desires and expectations of life. As per the teachings of *Bhagwad Gita*, the mental attitude and aptitude depend upon three basic characters. These characters are called *Gunas*. These three *Gunas* are known as *Satva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. *Satve guna* has predominant character of acquiring knowledge and giving the same to others. The person having predominant

Satva Guna, will be interested in acquiring knowledge, seeking internal values of nature's law, finding new horizons and new solutions of number of intrinsic problems, and discovering new vistas for removing suffering of man kind. All great thinkers, scientists and teachers are predominantly *Satvic* in nature. Their aim of life is to get more and more knowledge and teach the same to others.

Rajas Guna has the character for performing various activities for the personal gain. *Rajasic* people are interested in worldly pleasures. Their first priority is to get comfort and luxury in life. Businessman, professionals, traders and politicians are mainly *Rajasic* in nature.

The third basic *Guna* described in *Gita* is *Tamas*. The person having predominant *Tamas Guna*, are neither interested in acquiring knowledge nor interested in getting wealth. They are neither interested in welfare of the society nor in the welfare of self. These persons are having very few ambitions in life. They mostly follow the traditions and live very ordinary life. Their visions for life are very limited. Survival and reproduction are the only functions they carry out during the life.

None of the individuals are entirely *Satvic*, *Rajasic* or *Tamasic*. The person is always having mixture of all these three characters. The character which predominates in his personality is the guiding factor for deciding his desires, expectations which

in turn is responsible for deciding his aim of life. An individual with *Satvic* predominance will prefer the road to knowledge, the person with *Rajasic* predominance will select the path for material gain, while the person with *Tamasic* predominance will prefer not to walk.

Human desires and expectations are multiple and manifold. Numbers of factors are responsible for influencing human desires. In addition to family culture, society norms, religion and mental attitude, there are other two main human instincts, which are responsible for generating human desires. These two instincts are personal security and personal ego. For understanding these two factors, one should know the history of evolution of mankind and modern society.

4] Evolution of mankind

It is believed that a human being is biologically nothing but an animal. Primitive man was not very much different from the animal. With the result even to-day he possesses all the animal characters within himself. Basic instinct of all the animals is survival. This instinct of survival is subdivided as self survival and species survival. There are two basic needs for survival of self. These are food and protection against danger. The animal is all the time busy with the activity of searching for food. Once it gets enough food, it

takes rest till it is hungry again. By natural instinct it knows how to protect itself against danger. Protection is done by two ways, that is, either they run away from the danger or fight for self protection. Certain animals are naturally equipped with special organs for the purpose of fight. For example sharp teeth, sharp nails, strong horns etc. are possessed by certain animals so they can fight for protecting themselves. Certain types of animals are equipped with powerful legs so that they can easily run away from danger. Nature has also provided special senses to certain animals so that they can easily protect themselves from the danger. For example dogs have a special sense of smell where as cats are able to see in the dark.

In addition to self survival the animal possess special instinct for sex and reproduction. They instinctively select the partner, make love, reproduce children and rear these children. Most of the animal activities are limited to the purpose of self survival and species survival.

Man is basically an animal, so he has preserved both the instincts of animals, i.e. survival and reproduction. In short these are the instincts for procuring the food, giving birth to their progeny and self protection against danger.

Nature has bestowed higher mental capacity to the human being. Two special mental faculties possessed by man are the ability to remember their past experiences that is *memory* and

utilizing the same for solving future problems, that is *intelligence*. Animals can not remember their past experiences while man can remember his past events. Same way man can logically foresee and anticipate future events. With the result he developed the capacity to analyze the situation and plan for their future. No animals are known to preserve food for their future use because they could not think regarding probability of shortage of food in future. With the past experience man has learned that food may not be available all the time. So he started preserving and storing the food for future use. In the same way he has experienced danger against severe cold, heavy rain and severe heat; with the result he built a safe shelter to protect himself from anticipated danger. In the beginning he lived in the caves. With the passage of time he learned to construct houses for himself.

He has also learned from his experiences that he can very easily fight the danger of wild animals if he is in the group. So visualizing the future danger and taking precautions to protect him from anticipated dangers, gave him the sense of security.

First time for the purpose of security he started living in the group. He felt more secured in the group. In this way the instinct of security gave birth to system of group living. The same system of group living gradually developed in to modern society.

Once man started living in the group he felt more secured. Individually he was weak but he was stronger in the group. In the group it was easier for him to face and fight wild animals and other life threatening dangers. Group living has given him more security but part of his independence was lost in the system of group living. The man has to observe and obey certain rules which were set for the maintenance of harmony in the group. There were certain inbuilt responsibilities and commitment towards the group. Each group had one leader who was supposed to lead and direct the group. Naturally the leader should be the strongest among all. Being the leader and also being stronger, he had the advantage of getting better food, better shelter, better women and better facilities. Gradually groups became more organized. Each member of the group was allotted certain responsibilities and definite functions. The distribution of the responsibilities and functions were as per their individual strength and efficiency. This process has given birth to the system of status in the group. Stronger and more efficient were given higher responsibilities and better functions. They were respected in the group and were given higher status. While weaker and less efficient were given lower status in the group. The persons with higher status were more privileged and more respected in comparison to the persons with lower status. With the result there was competition among the people to get higher

status in the group. Inner instinct of each member of the group was to get higher status and respect in the group. The desire for getting higher status in the group became the ambition of each person. Even to-day in the modern society people desire to have higher and higher status in the society.

So the man has two natural instincts and two acquired instincts. The two natural instincts are self survival and species survival. And the two acquired instincts are sense of security and desire for higher social status.

For self survival the individual requires regular supply of food, shelter, and protection against danger.

For species survival the person requires sexual desire and matching spouse, who can satisfy his sexual need.

Security

Security means protection against future danger. The danger can be physical, financial, and social. Security against physical danger implies maintenance of normal physical health and protection against diseases and security against financial risk implies provision of enough money to get required food, clothing, shelter and medicine for life to sustain. Social security gives the person physical and emotional support for living a normal healthy life.

A higher social status in the society can give the person respect, recognition and prestige which ultimately satisfy his *personal ego*.

Social status

Each society develops its own parameters for awarding social status to the individual. There was a time in Hindu society when learned and educated people were highly respected. Educated and learned people were given higher status in the society. During that period the person had strong desire in their young age to grow up to become Pundit. People were going to *Kashi, Nalanda, or Taksha-shila* for getting higher education. There after social norms were changed. The second era was the era of war and fight. The society was in need of great warriors and brave people who can protect the community and the country. So the brave warriors started getting respect. In that era the young ones were aspiring to become good soldiers so that they can get respect in the society.

In the present materialistic era social status is highly influenced by the presence of comforts and luxuries in life. The rich and wealthy people are respected in the society. Amount of money possessed by the person, is the only parameter for measuring the success in life. Money has become the sign of social status. With the effect it is the desire of each individual to become rich and wealthy.

One can also surmise that power is always respected in the society. The *power* is the strength, which *can* draw the respect from the society. This strength may be physical, mental, financial, or political. The power gives status to the person. Status satisfies the inner lurking urge or desire to become more superior to others. It satisfies personal ego which can give rise to sense of happiness. In the civilized world it is not enough to get only food, clothing, shelter, protection and sex but one also requires higher status in the society. One has to thrive hard to get higher and higher status in the society. In today's era definition of success in life means to achieve higher status in the society which can be achieved by various means such by acquiring higher education and higher qualifications or acquiring greater political power and influence or by acquiring greater monetary power. Higher status in the society gives respect, recognition and prestige to the person. It indirectly satisfies his inner urge to become superior which ultimately inflates his inner ego.

5] Ego

The word ego has originated from the Latin language. The word 'ego' means 'sense of I-ness'. The meaning of 'I' is not in the sense of physical 'I'. 'I' does not mean 'my-body'. As such ego is not

related to the sense of 'my-body' but it is related to the mental perception of I-ness. Ego means how one perceives one-self. Each individual possesses precise and definite mental picture of himself. He understands himself more than any one else can understand him. He has exact knowledge of his capabilities, capacities, and limitations. He also has a vivid mental picture of his 'future -I'. He definitely knows that what he is to-day, and what he desires to be in future. In short he is aware of his present ego and his expected future ego. Future ego is always bigger than the present ego. Difference between the present ego and the future ego, generates desires and expectations in life. Individual may be poor today in his own eyes. His future mental picture is to be rich. He may be uneducated. But his future vision is to be highly educated. He may be powerless. His desire will be to become powerful in the future so he can rule over others. The difference between present and future visions of the self generates desires in his mind. The future vision of the self is always bigger than the present vision of the self. In short future ego is always bigger than present ego. Each individual thrives to expand and strengthen his personal ego.

The person with small and shrunken ego will feel inferior in front of his own eyes. And feeling of inferiority is not a happy and a pleasurable feeling. So his all efforts will be directed towards expanding his ego. So he can get the sense of superiority. The superiority can be in the field of

wealth, prestige, power, art, or education. Feeling of superiority indirectly inflates his personal ego. And inflated ego gives the feeling of happiness.

Again coming to the main points of basic instincts, man possesses four basic instincts. Out of that first two are handed over to him by his ancestors, i.e. animals. And other two are acquired during the process of evolution. These basic instincts are self survival, species survival, security, and social status. The individual's plan and the script for life mainly depend upon these basic instincts. Majority of the people spend their whole life period for satisfying these four basic instincts. He feels happy when these instincts are satisfied. But this type of happiness is short lived. It is observed that those who have achieved wealth, social status or power, are not happy in the real sense. At the fag end of their life they get the sense of emptiness. They feel that their life was meaningless. They feel that they have achieved everything which is meaningless and have not achieved the thing which gives meaning to the life. They are having all the riches, comforts and luxuries in the life nevertheless they are not contented. They feel incomplete in spite of having money, prestige, and power. Their so called happiness was not deep and permanent. It is this feeling of emptiness and incompleteness that has led a few thinkers to think about real happiness.

Theory of happiness

1] What is happiness?

Every individual desires to be happy in the life. It is the eternal, deep-rooted desire of human beings is to be happy in life. Person strives hard for whole his life to fulfill this desire. But for most of them it remains nothing more than mirage. Mirage is the false perception of the water in the desert. The traveler in the desert area, when travels at day time under hot sun, sees big collection of water, which is seen at the little distance from him. Being very thirsty, he walks fast towards the direction of water with the hope of getting good water. But when he tries to go nearer to the water, water recedes further away. The distance between the traveler and the water remain all the time same. The traveler can not reach to the water source, because water never exists there. In reality it was the wrong perception of the traveler. The traveler can not reach to such water even though he travels hundreds of miles. Same way in real life person tries to reach to the state of happiness but he never gets to that level. The distance between him and happiness remains same all the time. He can never reach to the state of happiness because all his perceptions regarding happiness are not real.

Happiness is the mental feeling which is desirable and pleasant. Being pleasant and joyful, human mind is always in search of that feeling. This pleasant feeling remains for in the mind for short period, so man is always hungry to get it often and often. Most of the human activities are linked directly or indirectly for the quest of happiness. But like mirage the man can not reach to the destination of real happiness. He tries to grab it but it remains always at considerable distance for whole his life. As per the medical science, chemical hormone named endorphin is secreted in the brain when the person is having the feeling of happiness. It is not certain whether the endorphin is the cause or result of happiness.

The feeling of happiness is very much personal and specific. Specific in the sense, certain specific objects or events may give the feeling of happiness to one person, while it may not be so for other. One person may get feeling of happiness while listening certain music, while for the other it may be simply the noise.

Happiness may be purely conditional.

Human mind is full of hidden capacities. All the past events are recorded in the memory section of the brain. Not only those events are recorded but they are categorized in the brain. Some of them are recorded as pleasurable while others are recorded as not pleasurable. Some of them can create the feeling of happiness, while other can create the sense of

unhappiness. Some of them may be less pleasurable while some of them may be more pleasurable. All the events are recorded and stored in the memory section as per the quality of feeling it creates. Those pleasant events or objects are liked by the mind. With the result it strives for the repetition of the same. Definite link is created in the mind between pleasant feeling and type of event, or unpleasant feeling and the type of event. This definite link between specific event and specific feeling is called conditioning of the mind. Mind gets conditioned to react in specific manner in respond to a specific object or event. For example the person who has enjoyed non-vegetarian food from the childhood, will get pleasant sensation on seeing nicely cooked chicken, but the same chicken can generate the feeling of nausea and vomiting in the person who is vegetarian through out his life. Same way some person may get the feeling of joy from looking at beautiful picture, while other person may get the same feeling from getting bundle of currency notes. One may be happy with health, other may be happy with status while the third person may be happy with obtaining political power.

All these above explained categories of happiness are not real happiness in the eyes of great thinkers. They are believed to be short lived and temporary pleasurable sensations which are wrongly stamped and named as happiness. Then again what is real happiness?

2] Real happiness

It is the feeling of inner self. It is the feeling of quietude and tranquility of the mind. Only contented and balanced mind can achieve quietude and tranquility. It is the feeling of total fulfillment; it is the feeling of a state of perfection. When a person experiences the state of perfection, all his desires get dwindle, because there is nothing remains to be achieved more. This feeling is not the feeling of pleasure because whenever there is pleasure there also exists non- pleasure. It is not the feeling of joy because whenever there is joy, there also exists sorrow. It is something beyond pleasure and joy. Pleasure and joy are temporary feelings of the mind. They can not give permanent feeling of happiness. Human mind is conditioned to move between two opposite poles. At one movement it enjoys extreme pleasure the next movement it is in the state of extreme displeasure, at one movement it is full of joy, the next movement it can be loaded with sorrow. In real state of happiness the mind is steady and stable. It does not move between two poles of characteristically opposite feelings. The mind stays and rests at the point of tranquility and quietude. Such mind is well balanced, contented and quiet. It is so contented that it attains the stage of desirelessness. There is no desire left to get any object. Quiet mind is like silent water, water without any turbulence.

Ordinary person's mind is like pendulum. It moves from right to left and from left to right. Such mind

moves from pleasure to displeasure and from displeasure to pleasure. It moves from joy to sorrow and from sorrow to joy. But the mind of real happy person i.e. tranquil mind remains steady. That mind is always steady at the point of tranquility.

Ordinary person's mind is subjected to be disturbed by external forces. It reacts positively or negatively as per the nature of the external forces. Favorable events or objects will create pleasurable feelings, while unfavorable events or objects, will create unpleasurable feelings. Such mind is always reactive. It reacts differently with different types of stimuli. Reaction of the mind is most of the time in proportion to the external stimuli. It reacts as per quality and quantity of the external stimuli. It means that happiness of the ordinary person depends totally upon nature of external forces, external objects, and external events. But real happiness is within and not without. It is with-in, and not without. It can not be the mental reaction but it is the permanent state of tranquility and quietude of the mind. More specifically it is the tranquil state of inner-self. To achieve such state of mind or inner-self, should be the main objective of the life.

As per the theory of evolution, animals live their lives with two basic instincts, i.e. self survival and species survival. Human beings live their lives with two added instincts, i.e. security and social status. Fulfillment of these four instincts can give rise to false sense of happiness. But it is not real happiness. When person realizes that wealth can give him comfort and luxury in life but not real

happiness; when he realizes that prestige and social status can satisfy his ego, but can not bring him real happiness; when he realizes that power can give him strength to rule over others but can not give him strength to rule over himself; when he realizes that material success can give him temporary joy and pleasure but can not give him permanent tranquility and quietude of mind; when he realizes that whatever he has gained in life, whatever he has earned for life time, can not give him internal happiness; and *finally when he realizes that the real happiness for which he has strive hard for life time, was not out of his grasp because it was all the time lying within himself; at that point of time, he enters in the field of spirituality.*

3] Spirituality

Spirituality is the third and final phase of evolution. It is evolutionary final stage of mankind. In the final stage of evolution man can be converted in to super human being. At this stage he realizes that he has achieved every thing and nothing is left to be achieved in life; his long search for happiness is complete. He arrives to the final destination, and this is the real aim of life.

For most of the people aim of the life is to be happy. But definition and vision of the happiness is different with different persons. Every person aims to be happy as per his own definition and norms. For some happiness means more wealth, so one can

get comfort and luxury in life. Some may link happiness with social status and prestige. For some happiness means more power. Power may be physical, political or financial. Power gives the person the sense of superiority. Power gives the strength to rule over others. Rulers and politicians fall into this category. For some happiness means creative activities. Action of creation can give sense of happiness. Great artists, poets, writers, musicians, painters, and photographers get the pleasure from their creative arts. Such people spend most of their life time in achieving high altitude in their artistic works. As such there exists as much number of definitions and specifications for happiness, as much number of people exists on this earth. If it is so then is it possible to have single definition for happiness which can cover all different and diversified modes of happiness? If we examine all above examples again in more details, then perhaps we can find out some common character and factor for happiness.

Let us examine all above examples in more detail.

A] For some person wealth can be the source of happiness. But what is the level of wealth? How much wealth can give sense of happiness? For some poor person getting Rs.1000.00 may be very happy event. While for the rich person whose regular monthly income is more than Rs. 100000.00, may not have any happy feeling with the same amount of Rs. 1000.00.

B] Small child may be happy with small desired toy hardly costing Rs. 5, but the same toy may not create any sense of happiness in the adult.

C] Rising to the higher social status may be happy event, but this happiness will not be same with everybody. Even with same person the level of happiness will gradually be reduced with the passage of time.

D] Gaining power may bring happiness but this is also very short lived. Because the person, who enjoys the result of power, may be happy, but As soon as he comes across the person who is more powerful than himself, his sense of happiness will disappear.

The common factor in all above examples is desire fulfillment. Once the desire is fulfilled the person gets the feeling of happiness. If desire is not fulfilled he gets the feeling of disappointment, dissatisfaction, and unhappiness. The person's happiness is very closely related with the fulfillment of his desires.

The problem of happiness is much more complicated and complex than it looks. To understand it fully one has to analyze the subject in more details.

4] Logic of unhappiness

When one thinks about the subject of happiness, when one tries to understand the theory of happiness, one should also analyze the causes of

unhappiness. As per the theory of *Sushrut* pains or sorrows are of three types.

A] *Adhi-daivik*

B] *Adhi-bhoutic*

C] *Adhi- atmic*

Adhi- daivik means the pains, sorrows, and unhappiness caused by natural calamities, unforeseen reasons, catastrophes, caused by the factors which are beyond the control of man. Flood, famine, hurricane, earthquake, tornados, accidents etc are under this category. These are *daivik* or natural calamities. If there is earthquake it will destroy number of lives and properties. If there is flood it will create mass destruction of humans and properties. If there is epidemic of any disease, number of persons will suffer and die. These are the events which can not be control and prevented by ordinary means. It is beyond the means of human control. One has to suffer and bear the pains and sorrows. The man can not do anything except praying god to give him enough strength to bear the sufferings.

The second type of unhappiness is *adhi-bhautic*. The unhappiness is due to the causes which are related to physical body. The person is vulnerable to various diseases. The diseases can cause pain and discomfort. There are numerous diseases which can cause pain and unhappiness in the life of the person. Out of all the diseases some of them can be prevented while other can not be prevented. The person can prevent communicable diseases but it is very difficult to prevent diseases like high blood

pressure, genetic diseases, old age diseases, and cancer. Most of the diseases are caused by internal and external factors. The person can take certain measures to control internal factors but it may not be possible for him to control external factors. Good food and better life style can prevent some diseases. But if the person is living in the industrial area, where air is highly polluted, it will be difficult for him to prevent the diseases caused by polluted air breathing. With proper diet, exercise and proper life style one can prevent certain number of diseases. But there are some diseases like cancer, genetic diseases and old age diseases which can not be prevented. So in such cases of *adhi- bhautik* causes for unhappiness, the man has partial control over the situation. In certain circumstances he can prevent it while in other situation he can not prevent it.

The third category of causes for unhappiness, are known as *Adhi- atmik*. It means pain and sorrows created by the person himself. This type of unhappiness is not inflicted by nature or by any external forces. The causes are related to the personal beliefs, way of thinking, desires, emotions, expectations, attachments etc. These are self created and self inflicted sorrows and mental disturbances which ultimately gives the feeling the unhappiness. Ninety percent of the causes of unhappiness fall under this category. If desire is not fulfilled, the person is unhappy, if expectations are not met, he is unhappy, if his ego is hurt, he is unhappy, if the person is not respected as per his

expectations, he is unhappy, if he is neglected by the family or friends, he is unhappy. All these examples are purely mental. Most of them are related with the specific attitude of the mind. In all such examples there is no material loss. There is neither the loss of property nor the loss of health. In spite of no loss the person carries the feeling of unhappiness. He feels mentally hurt. These are the causes which are totally under self control. One can prevent it with the change of mental attitude and rational thinking. We have discussed the causes of unhappiness. If person takes enough measures to prevent it, he can prevent unhappiness. But absence of unhappiness can not automatically create the state of happiness. As there are various causes for unhappiness, there are various types of happiness.

5] Different types of happiness

Happiness is the state of mind. It is pleasurable and joyful feeling. As per the belief of medical science, chemical hormone named endorphin is secreted in the brain when there is the feeling of happiness. But it is not certain that whether the secretion of endorphin is the cause of happiness or the result of happiness.

Happiness is the mental feeling, it is the pleasurable sensation felt by the human mind. It can be for short time or for longer time period. It can be felt at various levels in the mind. Broadly speaking it can be classified in four groups.

- A] Derived from purely sensory organs.
- B] Derived from the fulfillment of desires
- C] Ego based happiness.
- D] Happiness at the level of inner-self.
- E] Spiritual.

A] Sensuous

Type A is very superficial, short lived and momentary feeling of happiness. This is at the level of sensory organs. Human mind is connected with the out side world with five sensory organs. It collects information of out side world through these sensory organs. The information received through these sensory organs are analyzed by the mind and categorized as pleasurable or non- pleasurable. The same is stored in the memory section. In future whenever such information are received by the mind, similar sensations are felt by the mind. For example when the person eats tasty food, he gets pleasurable sensations because the same taste was stored in his memory box as pleasurable. So with the result he gets the feeling of joy. But this feeling is very short lived. Person eats tasty food, enjoys it and forgets it within short period. The person listens to good music. Enjoys it and forgets it within short period. So this type of happiness which is derived from the sensory organs are short lived and superficial.

B] Mental

This type of happiness is deeper than the first one. It is derived from the fulfillment of the desires. Desire is the mental urge to get something. It is the wish to get physical object or it may be mental urge to have better life in future. Human mind is all the time occupied with various desires. It is the basic character of the human mind to think for better future. It may think for more comforts in life, it may think for more luxuries in the life, it may think for more prestige and social status in life, or it may think regarding more power so that he can rule over others. Human mind is dynamic. It is all the time thinking about progress in the life. The progress may be objective or subjective in nature. The mind draws mental vision of the future life. The future vision of the life is always better and beautiful than present life. For achieving this future expected state of life, one requires to have change in present life. From this expected change desires are born. For example, the person is living in the small apartment having four rooms. His future vision is to have independent house with garden and six big rooms. For achieving his expectations as per his vision he requires to have bigger house with garden. The desire for the house with garden is born. Mental future vision of the life is the root cause for generation of the desires. The person, who is poor, desires to be rich. The person, who is weak, desires to be strong. The person, who is uneducated, desires to be educated. In fact most the persons spend their whole life for fulfilling

various desires. Even the person who is at the fag end of life, who is on the death bed, who has no future, desire to have better life in next birth. Most of the human activities are directly or indirectly related with desire fulfillment.

Desire is the mental urge. It is the wish to get something. Desire creates mental stress. With the emergence of the desire in the mind, there is strong feeling for fulfilling it. The mind starts its actions for fulfillment of desire. Mind starts thinking, planning, and acting for the purpose of desire fulfillment. Once the desire is fulfilled, there is no mental stress. The person gets satisfaction of achieving his desired goal. Desire fulfillment gives him the feeling of happiness. But this period of happiness is short lived, because as soon as one desire is fulfilled, the same replaced by new desire. Now the mind is occupied by feeling of new desire. Again mind starts acting for the fulfillment of second desire. Again there is mental stress. Again there is sense of satisfaction when that new desire is fulfilled. Again there is feeling of happiness. And again there is birth of third desire. The cycle of desire- desire fulfillment-sense of happiness, goes on for the life time. There is no end to human desires. Human mind never stops desiring.

Whenever there is desire, there is the expectation for its fulfillment. If expectation is met, then there is sense of happiness, but if expectations are not met, then there will be sense of disappointment and unhappiness. So with each desire there are two

possibilities. Either desire is fulfilled or it may not be fulfilled. If it is fulfilled then it will create sense of happiness and if it is not fulfilled then it will give sense of unhappiness. So there are fifty percent chances to get happiness and fifty percent chances for unhappiness. Now there exists not only one desire in the mind. There are chains of dormant desires at the bottom of human mind, which are coming to the surface at different time period. The possibilities of satisfying these desires are reduced gradually. Because in that chain of desires, the second desire is always bigger than the first one and the third is bigger than the second. With the effect, the person has to exert more, to satisfy the next desire. He has to exert more than what he has exerted for the first one. With the effect the possibilities of fulfilling the desire, will gradually be reduced with the emergence of new desire. At the end the person will be reaching to the point where he will not be in position to fulfill his desire.

The person, who is poor, will wish to have small income and small house where he can stay comfortably. As soon as he gets desired income and the house, he will think to have big house and more income. After getting that he will expect to have car and more luxury in the house. In this way he will go on increasing his needs. At last he will reach to the point where his desire will be so big that it will not be possible for him to satisfy it. Non- fulfillment of the desire will bring disappointment and sense of unhappiness. So it concludes that fulfillment of the desire can bring happiness, but that happiness will

be short lived, not only that but at the end there will be always unhappiness.

C] Ego based

The third type of happiness is related to personal ego. It is observed that whenever the ego is satisfied one gets sense of happiness. Personal ego is directly related to the state personal status compared to that of others. It is the feeling of social superiority. It is not enough that one should be rich, but he should be richer than his neighbor, friends, or near acquaintances. It is not enough that one should be powerful but he should be more powerful than others. It is not enough that one should be beautiful but she should be more beautiful than all her friends. Imagine that if person stays completely alone in the jungle, having nobody to see his riches, his power or beauty then all his achievements in gaining wealth, power or beauty will be of no use to him.

For the sole purpose of feeding and strengthening personal ego, the person tries hard to climb the ladder of success in life. Here success means getting higher position than his friends, relatives, and acquaintances. A person tries hard to get more wealth, higher power and greater respect, prestige, and position in the society, because all these gains strengthens his personal ego, which in turn gives him a sense of happiness. This feeling of happiness is deeper than the sensory and mental types of

happiness. But it is not long lasting and permanent, because of two reasons.

i) His so called material success, of gaining wealth, power, prestige or position has no absolute value. The material success is always measured, in relation to that of others. The person, having one million rupees, may be considered rich among the group of persons, having one lack rupees. But the same person is considered poor among the group of persons having hundred million rupees. Same way the person may be powerful to-day. He may get the sense of happiness, because his ego is satisfied. But the day he meets the person more powerful than him, his ego will be hurt. And he will get the sense of unhappiness. For the purpose of ego satisfaction, one has to maintain higher rank in his field. But it is not possible to maintain higher rank for a life time. The person may be richest at one time, but the time may come that some other person may become richer than him. With the result he will loose his first rank. The person may be most powerful at one time, but the time may come, when some other person may become more powerful than himself, and he may loose his first rank. In the history there are several examples of great kings, who were most powerful during their young age. But they were thrown out of the power during their old age.

ii) Achievement of material success depends upon, personal efforts and favorable circumstances. A person may work hard to be rich, but he may not be able to reach to the level of richness as per his desire because of certain unfavorable circumstances. It

may happen that he might have planned his strategy of his business, as per the existing government policy. As per his plan and expectations he may be sure to get success, but it may happen that over night government policy may get changed, and his plan may not work properly. He might have planned to manufacture certain items to sell in the market. But with the change of government policy, oil prize may go up, and he can not sell the same goods at the competitive rates in the market. In short, material success depends not only upon personal efforts but it is also dependent upon outside factors and these factors are not always under the control of the person. With the result, there are all chances of getting failure in spite of personal efforts. These failures can give rise to sense of unhappiness. Such ego based happiness, is short lived and has lots of uncertainty involved.

D] Based on creativity

Fourth type of happiness is deeper than the third one. It is at the level of the inner-self. It is directly related with the human creativity. Each person has his creative abilities. Each person has inbuilt instinct for creating some thing because it gives him satisfaction and sense of happiness. This happiness is felt at the level of inner-self. An artist who creates a good piece of art, a painter painting a beautiful picture, a musician performing sweet music, a writer writing a unique novel, a poet writing a poem,

experiences deep satisfaction and a sense of inner happiness, when he is totally absorbed in his work of creation. This type of happiness is at the deeper level of the mind. It is deeper than ego-centric happiness. Not only that but it is long lasting, because it is intimately connected with inner-self. Creative action of the person, helps expanding his personal image. He feels great in front of his own eyes. Each person carries his own mental picture. This can be called self mental image. The person likes this picture of self to be beautiful and impressive. Whenever the person performs good work, this self mental image gets better and better. At the same time when the person performs some awful work, his self image gets distorted and ugly. Nobody likes his image to be spoiled. So it is the common instinct of each person to do the work which improves his self image or self esteem. Creative action is one of the actions which can improve self esteem of the person which gives him the sense of happiness. This type of happiness is more lasting. This is because it is deeply rooted. This type of happiness is dependent only upon personal efforts. It is the outcome or result of continuous personal efforts. In Hindu philosophy it is called *Tapa*. One gets *Siddhi* after *Tapa*. A musician singing a beautiful classical song might have reached to that level of achievement after continuous practice of many years. A painter, who paints a beautiful picture, requires great effort of learning and practice. This type of learning and practice for achieving certain desired goal is called

Tapa. If person does *Tapa* for long time, he gets desired results. This resultant happiness is deep rooted and long lasting. It is long lasting but again it is not permanent.

E] Spiritual

The fifth type of happiness is spiritual. It is permanent. Spiritual happiness is neither at the physical level nor at the mental level. It is neither ego-centric, nor it is at the level of inner-self. As such it is directly connected with spirit or Atman. Atman can be described as the inner most layer of consciousness. As per the belief of Hindu philosophy and as per the opinion of the Upanishad, Atman is immortal, unmanifest, unchangeable, imperishable and permanent. It itself is the living force, which exists in the form of ecstasy. Any feeling attached with it, takes the form of pure consciousness and becomes permanent. This type of happiness is neither joy nor sorrow, it is neither happiness nor unhappiness, and it is neither pleasure nor displeasure. It is endless ever lasting sense of quietude, peace, and bliss. This special sense does not depend upon any achievement, desire fulfillment, ego satisfaction, or act of creation. It is peaceful sense of being. It is the action of realizing the self. It is the action of touching the inner core of being. It is the action of knowing the inner spirit. It is the sense of reaching the ultimate.

When a person reaches to this stage, his mental turbulences disappear. His mind becomes calm and

quiet. His mind is now desireless because now for him nothing remains to be achieved. He has touched the peak of the tallest mountain, now he can not go up. In this stage he is so much contented that there is no room for any desire or expectations. His mental state is like the silent and pure water. His mind is so stable that it can not be disturbed by any external forces. He ultimately realizes that he himself is full of joy; he realizes that happiness lies within himself. He does not have to depend upon any external factors for achieving the same. The joy is deeply embedded within himself, so he has not wander outside in search of happiness. It was all the time with him, but he was not in the position to consciously recognize it, realize it. But when he realizes that his innermost core, which can be known as chetna, atman, spirit, or soul, is nothing but the sense of eternal ecstatic feeling, when realizes that his inner spirit itself is the lighted candle, which is responsible for enlightening his whole being, when the person throws away his outer cover of egoism, when he throws away his desire to be happy, when he throws away all his expectations from life, when he throws away his attachments to the living and non- living, and when he throws away his sense of I-ness and the sense of my-ness, when he throws away all the external covers which have blocked the light of chetna, only then does he enjoys the radiance of that beautiful divine light of chetna. At that moment he understands the real meaning of happiness. This happiness is eternal, because chetna is eternal. When a person realizes his self,

automatically he becomes free from all the worldly bondages. Now he is Mukta. At that moment he conceives the presence of the great creator of this universe. At that time he also conceives that he is not a separate entity but he is also a part of the universal chetna. He is a small wave of the Great Ocean. He may be small but he is not separate from the ocean, in fact he is a part of it. Being a small part of universal chetna and being spiritually connected with it, he loses his separate identity. He becomes one with the universal chetna or Brahma. At that time he says that *Aham brahmasmi*.
This is the stage of real happiness.

Human mind

1] Physical body

The human body is a precious creation of nature. Body organs and systems are so developed that they perform their functions rhythmically and regularly for years together. All the organs and systems of the body are interdependent and inter-related. The self coordinated functions of the various organs and systems of the body lead to the ultimate goal of survival and reproduction. The most surprising character of the human body system is its regularity, rhythmicity and autonomicity.

The various complex and complicated body systems function normally and steadily without the conscious awareness of the person. For example, our heart beats regularly, our kidneys filters body wastes, our stomach and intestines digest food, the liver detoxifies the toxins and the lungs purify the blood of carbon dioxide and provide fresh oxygen to the blood. All these functions are carried out by each and every organ and system of the body regularly and efficiently without the conscious knowledge of the person.

In-depth study and knowledge of the physiology and anatomy of the body has revealed number of facts which are more thrilling and exciting than any fiction story. There are number

of organs and systems in the body working in close coordination with each other. Some of the major systems of the body are as follows:

- (1) Digestive system
- (2) Cardio vascular system
- (3) Respiratory system
- (4) Nervous system
- (5) Urinary system
- (6) Reproductive system

Digestive system:

The digestive system is responsible for processing food, breaking it down into usable proteins, carbohydrates, minerals, fats, and other substances, and introducing these into the bloodstream so that they can be used by the body. This system is responsible for providing nutrition to the body which is required for the growth and development of body.

Cardiovascular System:

In order for the body to stay alive and function efficiently, each of its cells must receive a continuous supply of glucose and oxygen. At the same time, carbon dioxide and other materials produced by the cells must be picked up for removal from the body. This process is

continually maintained by the body's cardiovascular system through blood.

Respiratory System:

The respiratory system is responsible for supplying oxygen to the blood and expelling waste gases, of which carbon dioxide is the primary constituent, from the body. The process of respiration helps in purification of blood

Urinary System:

Urinary system is responsible for excretion of liquid waste products from the body. All soluble toxins and waste products are excreted through this system.

Reproductive System:

Reproductive system is responsible for reproduction of progeny which is essential for the survival of species.

Nervous System:

The nervous system functions as the central command. It regulates all the systems and organs of the body. It is responsible for maintaining coordination and harmony between various organs and systems of the body. The nervous system of the human anatomy is responsible for

sending, receiving, and processing nerve impulses. All of the body's muscles and organs rely upon these nerve impulses to function.

Three systems constitute the nervous system and these systems function together to carry out the mission of the nervous system. These systems are the central nervous system, the peripheral nervous system, and the autonomic nervous system. There are two main functions of this nervous system. One section of the system works for the maintenance and regulation of internal body mechanism, which is known as autonomic nervous system. The second section is responsible for maintaining link between body and external world. This is done through various sensory organs like eyes, nose, ears, skin and tongue. The person gets visual information of external world with the help of eyes, tactile information with the help of skin, auditory information with the help of ears, olfactory information of various smells through nose and information of taste with the help of tongue. All such information is collected through these five sensory organs, and is analyzed by the central part of nervous system. The response of the body depends upon the analyzed data or information received through the various sensory organs. Medically the brain is sub-divided into a bigger brain and a smaller brain. The bigger brain is known as the cerebrum and the smaller brain is known as the cerebellum in medical terms. The brain is connected with various parts of the body through the spinal cord

by a big network of nerves which constitute the peripheral nervous system. There are two types of nerves. The first type of nerves which are responsible for bringing information from the sensory organs to the brain are known as the sensory nerves and other type of nerves which are responsible for carrying messages from the brain to the peripheral parts of the body are known as the motor nerves.

Human brain has the capacity to store information, to analyze and evaluate this information and to take decisions as per the analysis and evaluation of this data. The faculty of the brain which is responsible for storing information is known as memory, and that faculty of the brain which is responsible for analyzing it is known as intelligence.

The whole physical body functions as per the decision taken by the brain. The decision of the brain depends upon the information received from the outside, its analyzed form and past experience stored in the memory section of the brain. For example, if a person is walking in the garden and by chance if his finger comes in contact with the thorn of one plant, then automatically his hand will be withdrawn. The entire process of experiencing the painful stimulus, analyzing and evaluating the same, and the decision to withdraw the hand by the mind happens in a fraction of a second. Now if we analyze this whole process we can see that there are a number of steps involved from point of feeling the painful stimulus of the

thorn up to the decision to withdraw the hand. For example, when the finger of the hand touches the thorn, the sensory nerve under the skin receives the painful sensation which is then conveyed to the central brain for interpretation. In the brain, the sensations are analyzed as painful and injurious. The brain also compares this experience with the past experience stored in the memory section. Information received from the memory, informs the brain that such painful sensations can be from the thorn on the plant, and it can be harmful to the body. The brain then takes the decision to withdraw the hand. It then sends a message to the muscles of the hand to withdraw it. This message is sent through motor nerves. In the end, the hand is withdrawn. The procedure looks complicated but it is done in the fraction of a second. In short, the nervous system of the human body controls the whole body mechanism and maintains link with the outside world, so that it can get enough food for survival and life can be protected from outside danger. All animals are having such a nervous system that helps in the survival of their life.

Man is at a higher step of evolution as compared to the animals. Animals are mainly instinctive. Their body mechanism is mainly for the survival of self and the survival of their species. So their nervous system which controls their inner and outer life is not as developed as that of the human beings. Most of the animals are having very limited mental activities and hence

their brains are having very limited functions, with the result, they cannot relate to their past experiences nor can they think and plan for their future.

Only human beings can think above the level of the basic instincts for survival and reproduction. Man can think about the future and can plan his life as per his desires. Man can store his past experiences in his memory box and can utilize it when required. A man is able to think, interpret situations, analyze and evaluate problems, can remember and recall the past and can utilize this past experience for future planning; can create new gadgets and equipments based on his need; can speak different languages and can also think about personal and social securities. These and various other faculties are highly developed in man. All these higher faculties are due to the human mind.

2] Mind

However anatomically there is no organ in the body known as the mind. But functionally one can feel it.

The human brain can be compared to a highly sophisticated computer. Computers are made up of mainly two components. The first section is known as the hardware and second section is known as the software. The hardware consists of the monitor, the mother board, the hard disc and

other electronic parts of the computer. Those parts can be seen in the computer. The software is the inbuilt program, which is responsible for running the computer for different requirements. In the same way, the brain is the hard-ware of the human computer. It provides nerve cells and the network of nerves that are useful for the propagation and storage of messages and information. While the mind is the soft ware which utilizes the brain structure for various purposes of life. All the computers are having same types of hardware but their efficiency depends upon the software that it contains. Hence some of the computers are utilized as mere calculators, and some are used for playing games. Business men use the same computer for maintaining their business accounts and artists use it for creating artistic pictures and great authors use it for writing books. In the same way, everybody has been gifted with the basic hardware called as the human brain but the utilization of this brain depends upon the individual efficiency and capacity of the mind. Certain people, who have low mental capacity, utilize the brain power for mere survival and maintenance of life. Their usage of brain is as good as that of any animal. The person who has more developed mind can utilizes the same brain for gaining material success, social status and prestige. Other person utilizes this same brain for creative activity whereas very few people utilize it for spiritual progress in life. So it is the mind, and not the

brain, which determines the person's mental capacities and abilities.

The Human Mind

The human mind is a complicated, complex and subtle component of the human brain. Being subtle, it can not be seen or felt, but it still exists and controls all the activities of life. The human mind is the master of the whole physical body. The physical body has to act and function as per the desire of the mind. The physical body cannot perform any action independently without the knowledge and command of the mind. In human life, a person has to take numerous decisions that may be as small as selecting the type of food or it may be as big and important as selecting the aim of life. All such decisions are taken by the mind. The mind is the decision maker for all the decisions, the enjoyer of all the pleasures in life, the planner for all the plans of life, the observer of all the events in life and the actor of all the actions of life. It is the seer of all the scenes and the witness of all the activities of life. Our mind is always watchful and awake. Even when person sleeps, his physical body takes rest but his mind remains active. Mind creates its own world of dreams and enjoys it. The mind is the consciousness which manifests in different forms. When it is manifested as the sense of 'I' ness, it is known as 'ego'. When it is engaged in solving problems, it is known as 'intelligence'. When it

engages itself for remembering the past, it is known as 'memory'. When it manifests as different feelings like love, hate, anger, revenge, happiness, pleasure, grief, sorrow etc; it is known as 'emotions'. The mind can be manifested as the thought process or it can be manifested as desires and expectations.

Main function of the mind is decision making. Mind is the only decision maker in the total body mechanism. Physical body can not function without directions from the mind. it has to take orders from the mind. Physical body without mind is like motor without driver. Mind gets all the necessary information with the help of sensory organs, gets it analyzed with the help of memory and intelligence, and then takes the decision. When mind perceives the danger, it orders the body to run away from the danger. So decision making is dependent upon perception. Wrong perception leads to wrong decision and right perception leads to right decision.

Perception

Perception is the ability to visualize an object or an event in its totality and interpreting it logically and objectively. Perception means getting all the information regarding an object or event and then understanding all the facets of the object or event represents. Human mind is a very complicated and a complex machine. Man is bestowed with five sensory organs. These are ear, nose, eye, skin and tongue.

The information received through organs is in the form of sound, smell, image, touch and taste. The mind utilizes these sensory organs for receiving information regarding the outside world. The mind interprets this information in the light of its knowledge and past experience. For example eyes see some flower. The information of shape, color and size of flower is conveyed to the mind. Nose collects the information regarding the smell of the flower. This is also conveyed to mind. Mind combines all the information received through eyes and nose, and identifies it as rose flower in the light of its knowledge and past experience. This recognition is due to his existing knowledge of flower. The person who has never seen the rose in his life time will not be in a position to recognize it. Because his mind has no knowledge of rose.

The mechanism of perception looks very simple but it is not as simple as it looks. There are two main factors which are mainly responsible for influencing human perception. These two factors are the ability of the sensory organ to collect right information and ability of the mind to interpret it correctly.

Information received through the sense organs may be incomplete or defective. Blind person can not see the rose or color blind person can not recognize the color of the rose. Most of the time information received through sense organs is not complete. With the result it can not reflect total picture of the object or event. Mechanism may look very simple in the case of rose but for the bigger or more complicated objects and events, it is difficult to perceive the

whole and correct picture. There is very good example of the story of elephant and four blind persons. There were four blind persons. Once they came close to a big elephant. One blind man touched the big leg of the elephant. For him elephant was like a pillar. Second man touched the trunk of the elephant. For him elephant was like a pipe. Third blind man touched the body of the elephant. He perceived the elephant as a wall. The fourth blind man caught the tail of the elephant. He compared that elephant with the rope. In this case the elephant was not like a pillar, pipe, rope or wall. But perception of each blind person was wrong because of incomplete information due to defective sensory organs.

Human life is much more enormous, vast and complicated than rose or elephant. So it is very difficult to perceive life completely and correctly.

The perception based on incomplete information is called the key-hole perception. For example if one tries to see through a key-hole, one will be able to see only a very small part of the room. If he tries to conclude on the basis of this partial vision of the room, he may draw a wrong conclusion. For example he may see the floor of the room covered with a beautiful red carpet. He may conclude that the room is luxuriously furnished and may belong to some rich person. In fact it may happen that the room may be occupied by some poor tailor. There may not be any furniture in the room. The carpet seen by him through the key-hole might have been brought by the tailor for repairing it. In the same way one

makes mistake in perceiving other person's behavior, attitude or intention.

Second type of defective perception, is known as snap-shot perception. Most of the people draw conclusion regarding the character and personality of the other person during their first short period visit. The other person may behave nicely and politely during that visit with the result the first person may conclude that the other person is nice and polite. But the other person might have tactfully concealed his other bad characters. In Hindu society a short time meeting is arranged between the boy and girl for selecting the mate. The boy and the girl meet at some place for a short time. Then they draw a conclusion regarding the character of other fellow, and may select him or her as a life partner. As such it is very difficult for the person to judge another person in that short meet. Perceiving the object or event within short exposure is known as snap-shot perception.

The second factor affecting the perception is ability of the mind to interpret the information correctly. In the example of rose the person who has never seen the rose in his life time can not recognize it. The person, who has never visited the hill station or sea beach, can not think regarding the pleasant climate, and beautiful scenery of a hill station or a beach. The person, who has never seen the ocean, can not perceive the vastness of it. These are the people who are ignorant regarding the facts. As they are aware of their limitations, most of the time, such persons keep themselves away from coming to any

conclusion. But there are certain types of people who are not only ignorant but they carry pre-conceived ideas in their mind. They are more adamant. They are not ready to change their views. Even though, their conclusions are wrong, they never admit it. Their minds carry false and fixed opinions regarding various subjects. Because of certain past experiences and wrong knowledge, certain wrong ideas are deeply embedded in their minds. With the effect their minds react in a definite and a fixed manner in certain circumstances. In medical terms this is called conditioning of the mind. Human mind can be conditioned by repeating same type of experiences. The response of the mind will be same once it is conditioned. The taste for particular color or smell is because of the conditioning of the mind. Some body likes sweet taste. While some other may like hot taste. This is because, the person who eats sweet articles from the childhood, will develop liking for a sweet taste. While the person who is habituated to take hot food, may develop taste for the hot food. One person may like red color, other person may like green, while third person may like blue. This is because their minds are conditioned to like and prefer a specific color. There are no absolute values which can prove either red or green is better than the other colors. Conditioning of the mind starts from childhood. For example, the boy who is brought up in a non-vegetarian family will be pleased with sight and smell of nicely cooked chicken, but at the same time the boy who is brought up in a pure vegetarian

family, may get nauseating sensation with the sight of such non-vegetarian food. This is because the first boy is conditioned with non-vegetarian food, while the second boy is not conditioned. Normally the mind gets conditioned to various factors and events (in the medical terms it is called stimuli) during life time. Mental ability for interpretation is highly affected by conditioning of mind. Interpretation is also affected by specific paradigm.

Paradigm is the Greek word. It means model, theory, perception, assumption or frame of work. Paradigm plays great role in life of person. It is different with different individual, because of differing paradigm; persons perceive the life in their own way. The right perception gives right knowledge of the world which ultimately helps the mind for right decision making.

Inner-self or Mana

As per the opinion of *Adi-shankaracharya*, the human body functions at two conscious levels, one at the physical level and second at the mental level. The physical body is made up of bone, skin, muscle, organs and various systems. This whole structure is known as physical-self, whereas memory, intelligence, ego and other emotions are part of the inner-self. This inner-self is also known as the '*mana*' in *Sanskrit* language. The feeling of 'I-ness' is felt at the level of the inner self, and not at

the level of the physical self. It is believed that at the time of death physical self disintegrates, but the inner self remains intact. The person carries this inner self or 'sanskaras' of this birth to his next birth; with the result all the knowledge and experiences and basic inner values and qualities are carried forward from this birth to his next birth. This inner-self is subtle and hence cannot be seen. The human mind in the broader sense is nothing but the inner-self as described by *Adi-shankaracharya*.

3] Strong mind

The Mind is the master of the whole body system. Only a person with a strong mind gets success in life. For any type of success whether material or spiritual, one requires to have a strong mind

The mind is a separate entity and is not the brain. The Mind is a human consciousness, which is manifested in thoughts, memory, perception, feelings, desires, expectations or imagination. In human being the mind is more important than physical body. Physical body has to act as per the will and desire of the mind. The "I" consciousness lies not with physical body but with mind. As per the Hindu philosophy there are three levels in the human body.

These are:

- (1) Physical body or outer-self
- (2) Mind or inner-self

(3) Pure live force or Atman.

The physical body or outer-self can be felt or perceived easily because it is gross. The inner-self or mind is more subtle in form and it can not be seen even after dissecting the whole physical body. But it still exists and governs all the activities of life. The strong feeling of “I” does not lie with the physical body but it is in reference with the mind or the inner-self. The mind can think, memorize, plan for the future, feel the joys and sorrows of life and can feel happiness or unhappiness, and can experience love or hate. It is the master under whose order the physical body has to function. It is comparatively easier to make the physical body stronger and healthy, but it is much more difficult to make a strong and a healthy mind. A person can achieve great success, not with the help of a strong body but only with the help of a strong mind. Great sages like *Jesus Christ*, *Mahatma Gandhi*, *Mahavir*, and *Buddha*, were having a fragile body but they possessed strong minds.

As per the Hindu philosophy all the mental activities of human body are done by the ‘*Mana*’. ‘*Mana*’ is a Sanskrit word. There is no equivalent word of ‘*Mana*’ in English or any other language. ‘*Mana*’ may be called as the mind, but even the word ‘mind’ cannot explain it fully. It is the subtler part of human being. It remains active during awakened and the dream state. The feeling of ‘I’-ness is felt at this level.

4] Positive characters of the mind

The main characters and qualities of a strong mind are seven characters, which are known as positive characters. These characters are;

- (1) Stability
- (2) Rationality
- (3) Independence
- (4) Compassion
- (5) Integrity
- (6) Self Confidence
- (7) Positive attitude towards life

Stability:-

The inherent characters of the strong mind are steadiness, stability and equanimity in diagonally opposite situations and seasons of life. In human body, the mind is the decision maker. So the mind should be stable and unwavering. It takes decisions every minute and at each step and turn of life. The physical body has to act as per the decision of the mind. The decision can be as small as selecting the color of the shirt or it can be as big as selecting a partner for lifetime. Decisions are always taken initially at the level of the mind. Only a stable, steady and a firm mind can take right decisions and can stand by these decisions.

For success in life, either in the material world, or in the spiritual world, a correct decision at the right time is very important. There are people, who are indecisive by nature. They can not take decisions in a reasonable time, with the effect they are always at loss. They are unable to capitalize on the opportunities coming in life. On the other hand a person with a strong, firm and determined mind can take their decisions and stand by their decisions without any hassles even in the worst of situations and hence these people are able to achieve their desired goals in life. Life is not a smooth road. There may be problems, failures, losses, hurdles, disasters or catastrophes in one's life. A person with weak and unstable mind will not have the inner strength to cope with such unpleasant events of life. If he meets with hurdles or problems in life, he will lose his steadiness of mind and shall change his decisions immediately. Such individuals cannot reach to their final destination, cannot achieve their desired goals in life, either material or spiritual.

Human life is unpredictable, uncertain and indefinite. The road is not smooth all the time. There may be incidences or events in life which can give rise to joy or sorrow, pleasure or pain, success or failure, happiness or unhappiness. Such diagonally opposite events can disturb the equanimity of the mind resulting in the loss of peace, quietude and tranquility. A stable and steady mind remains cool, calm, composed,

undisturbed and unperturbed during all such events of life. In *Gita*, it has been mentioned that:

‘ He whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows and is free from eager desire amid pleasures, he from whom passion, fear, and rage have passed away, he is called a sage of settled intelligence’.

Rationality:

Rationality is the second main character of a healthy and a matured mind. Rationality is the process of rational thinking and rational behavior which is consistent with reality and based on sound and factual reason or logic. Rational thinking means a thought process which is based on purely understandable and logical reasoning and belief. Hence when one believes that sun or moon eclipse is due to specific geographical positions of the sun, moon, and earth, is rational thinking, but on the other hand when one believes that the sun or moon eclipse, is due to the unholy action of the two demons, *Rahu and Ketu*, is nothing but an irrational belief. Similarly when one believes that any sickness can be cured by proper medical treatment, it is scientific and rational thinking, but when one believes that sickness can be removed by certain religious actions, it is irrational thinking. Irrational beliefs are based on certain made to believe, unscientific

and illogical beliefs. Such beliefs are not based on scientific, logical, sound and factual reasons. Rational thinking can be developed through right observation, right perception, and right conception. Correct perception, observation, and conception, will lead to rational thinking, which ultimately will lead to rational behavior.

Right Perception and rationality

Perception is the impression and the knowledge gained by the mind of the external world through its sensory organs. Right perception leads to rational thinking, while wrong perception pollutes the mind, which ultimately leads to irrational thinking. Wrong perception can be a key-hole perception, snap-shot perception or colored perception. Human mind is often conditioned by his past experiences. Those who have heard number of ghost stories in the childhood, definitely believes in the existence of ghosts, and the same irrational belief persists even in their adult life. Wrong concepts based on wrong perception generate irrational thinking, which ultimately leads to irrational behavior; All the beliefs of the existence of ghosts, all the beliefs in palmistry, numerology and astrology, are baseless and without any logical reasoning. Most of the religious stories are full of miracles. Such miracles are created by the story teller, for the sake of enhancing the image of the specific god. Such stories gradually condition the mind of the

listener. With the effect the listener of such miracle stories will lose the art of logical reasoning. Not only that but such irrational beliefs are considered as deep faith in the religion, god, or in some saint. In the past number of battles were fought on the name of religion. Numbers of people have died for the sake of wrong beliefs of religion and that of god. Action of sacrificing the life of some animals, for the satisfaction of certain god or goddess, is nothing but the belief based on irrational thinking. Belief of hell and heaven is nothing but irrational belief. But most of the people believe it firmly.

Irrational thinking and belief, leads to irrational behavior. Nowadays people have started believing in the horoscope. Even choosing of the life partner is done through certain methods of comparing the horoscopes of the girl and the boy. There are examples where marriages could not be settled simply because horoscopes of the girl and boy were not compatible.

Independence

The third character of a healthy and a strong mind is independence. This is the capacity and the ability of the mind to think independently. Human mind is all the time engaged in thinking which may either be for the past or for the future.

Most of the time, the human mind thinks within the boundaries created by society, caste, family, religion. From the very childhood the human mind learns to think in specific patterns and within specific boundaries. All the thoughts are primarily based on some well established principles. The person who is born in a Hindu family will all the time think regarding re-birth, immortality of soul and reward of good *Karma* in the next birth. All his thinking and theories of life will be based on these principles and will rotate around same basic theme. On the other hand the person born in a non-Hindu family will never think about re-birth. An *Ayurvedic* Doctor attributes all his causes of diseases to *vat, pit and kuf*. While allopathic doctors, all time will think of bacteria and viruses as the prime cause of diseases.

In the same way, most of the people create certain patterns of thinking based on certain traditional principles. Such people are basically conservative by nature. They will never think anything beyond their established self boundaries. Not only that but they are rigid in their thinking and adamant to accept any new ideas forwarded by other people.

Independent thinking means to think freely, without any prejudice. Mostly human mind gets conditioned to think in one specific way, within specific limits. Conditioning is due to life long experiences, and impressions of environment within which the person lives. The person without

the ability of independent thinking is unable to cross the borders of traditionalism. They are the followers. They can only walk on the established roads. They can not find out new tracks or roads. They live traditionally and die traditionally.

Independent thinking is closely linked with creativity. It is not possible to create anything without free thinking. All the artists, scientists, thinkers were basically independent thinkers. They have tried to find out some new ways, methods, roads, principles for the betterment of human life. In ancient times, it was strongly believed that earth is stable and the sun being the planet of earth moves around the earth. First time Galileo proclaimed that this theory is wrong. He announced that the earth is one of the planets of sun and it is the earth that rotates around the sun along with other planets. His new theory was opposed by all people including the church. At last he had to apologize publicly for his new theory. Then he said that, 'Now I say that earth is not moving but because of my statement, the earth will not stop rotating around the sun.' After some time his theory was accepted. Even today there are certain groups of conservative people who strongly believe that earth is not round but it is flat. In all the fields of life there are people who are capable of independent thinking, and these are the only people who discover innovative ideas and theories.

It was traditionally believed that freedom movement could not possibly get success without

starting war with the ruler, but it was Gandhi, who gave the new idea of non-violence. Even Gandhi was opposed by number of persons in the beginning, but at last he proved his theory and brought independence to India. *Dr. Hahneman* was a German doctor. He gave new theory and ideas regarding the cause of disease which was quite contrary to the prevailing thoughts. He was opposed by all the doctors of that time. He was asked to leave from all the places in Germany where he propagated his new theories and concepts. At last he was proved right and a new system of medicine emerged and that is Homeopathy. Such incidences are many in all the fields of life and there have always been people who went beyond the established principles and established norms of thinking and who created new theories and new principles.

Creativity is the basic parameter of grading mental capacity. Other parameters are will-power, memory, intelligence and receptivity. So mind without creativity is an incomplete mind. The person without creativity can not progress in life. Mind without the ability to think independently is a closed mind and person with a closed mind can not learn or adopt or create anything new in the life. Conservative society can not progress and hence its growth gets stunted. Such society can not keep up with the growth of other progressive societies. With the results it disappears from the earth with the passage of time. Whenever there is no independent thinking,

there is no creativity. And the mind is never complete without the quality of creativity.

Compassion

It is the fourth and most important character of a healthy mind. Compassion is a special mental faculty, which generates humane feeling towards other living beings. Human relationships are primarily based on this special mental faculty. The whole human society is based on the principal of human relationships which is the result of compassion towards each other. Compassion is the feeling, which enables an individual to understand and feel the feelings and emotions of other human beings. This is also termed as empathy. With this faculty of mind, one human can understand and feel the sorrow and misery of another human. With this feeling only he is motivated to help others, who are miserable or are in distress. A mind might be stable, fearless, integrated, rational, having the power for independent thinking and intelligent, but if it is not filled with compassion, then it will become like a Satan's mind. Intelligence without compassion leads to total selfishness. Such a person will be totally self-centered. All his positive actions will be for selfish motive only. Such a person may perform certain generous acts, like donating for poor, building temples or hospitals, etc; which apparently appear like humanitarian acts, but inwardly such acts are only for achieving certain

rewards like getting social status or prestige. On the other hand, a compassionate person helps another only for the joy of helping without any desire for any kind of reward or recognition. A person with true compassion helps another and experiences utter pleasure only from act of reaching out and helping another being. This kind of pleasure derived from helping another is also known as altruism. Such a person will be so sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others, that not only he will understand the sufferings of others but he will suffer himself. He helps others not for the sake of any kind of reward, but because such an act gives him deep inner mental satisfaction and pleasure. All the religions of the world are based on the main principle of humanity. Humanity can not be generated without the feeling of compassion towards others. Human mind without compassion is an incomplete mind.

Integrity

Integrity denotes soundness, wholeness and completeness. The word integrity is originated from the Latin word '*integritas*'. The meaning of '*integritas*' is sound, whole or complete. The man with integrity is the man with a sound character. Such a person adheres very firmly to his code of conduct, ethics, standards, values and principles of life. Such person will not compromise with basic values and standards of life for the sake of

any material gain. For him, standards and principles of life are most important. Such a person is complete and integrated. Being integrated his thoughts, speech and actions are always identical. His whole outward personality is the actual reflection of his own inner characters. His personality is naturally glorified by the strength of his inner characters. Such a person does not require cosmetic appliances, polished language and stylish etiquette to impress people because his personality is naturally beautified by the strength of his inner characters.

Such person is true to himself and at the same time true to others. He is trustworthy and honest. People trust him because he always sticks to his words, keeps his promises and adheres to his principles of life.

Being integrated to his own conscious he cannot behave contrary to his own beliefs and convictions. Such a person cannot be a hypocrite because it is difficult for him to cheat his own conscious. He is truthful by nature. His truthfulness is not superficial and implanted on him by outside sources, but it is the reflection of his own conscious, and having a transparent and a pure conscious, he can not make a false projection of his personality. He speaks the truth not because it is religious and moral to speak the truth but he speaks the truth because he cannot speak lies.

Being integrated with his own conscious he all the time feels ones with the conscious. And such

oneness with inner conscious enhances his inner vital energy and thus increases his mental strength.

Self Confidence

Self confidence is the trust on one's own self. It means reliance on one's own powers and abilities. A person is born with certain powers and abilities and the same can be utilized for getting success and achieving various goals in life. Those who can utilize their capabilities at the fullest potential can get better success in life. But most of the persons are under utilizing their capabilities with the result their achievements are limited. It is like not utilizing the machine with its full potential. It is like driving the racing car with the ordinary speed of 60 km/hour. It is like using the computer for the purpose of simple calculations and maintaining household accounts. A person under utilizes his abilities because he is not fully aware of his own power and capabilities. This is true for physical as well as mental capabilities. On an ordinary day a person can hardly run for 100 - 150 meters but the same person can run up to 1000 meters if he is chased by some wild animal. It is also presumed that most of the people utilize hardly 20% of their total brain power. There is well known story that once one lion's cub was accidentally separated from its mother because the mother was killed by a hunter. Then by chance the cub met with a herd of sheep and was

reared along with the other sheep. With the passage of time the cub has grown into an adult lion. It has physically achieved the strength and the ferocity of the lion but mentally it was like a sheep only. Though it was a lion but it was afraid of other lions, tigers, wolves, jackals, etc. on one day by chance the same lion saw its own image in the water. The moment it saw its own image mentally it became aware that it is not a sheep but it is a lion. Its fear of other animals disappeared and it achieved the self confidence of protecting itself as well as hunting other animals. In the same way, most of the persons are not aware of their own power and abilities. This is because they have never seen their real image. They always think that they are sheep. They can never recognize and see the brave and the strong lion sitting inside their mind, with the result they lack self confidence. The person without self confidence can never get success in any field of life, either in the material world or in the spiritual world. Like other ordinary people he moves in the herd of sheep, lives an ordinary life and dies as an ordinary person. At the same time the person with self confidence can climb the ladder of success to fulfill his desires and expectations and can achieve higher goals in life. There are several such examples in history where seemingly ordinary persons have made phenomenal achievements in their lives. For example, Professor Einstein was a very ordinary student in his school days, and most of the time he was graded below normal by

his teachers. This is because he was not aware of his mental capacities and was lacking self confidence. But by gradual efforts and persistence he achieved self confidence and could become one of the greatest scientists of the 20th century who made a number of revolutionary researches in the field of nuclear science.

Self confidence can be developed either by one's own efforts or by the able guidance of the teacher. It is the prime duty of the teacher to detect and activate the dormant abilities and potentials of his pupils. For the development of self confidence one should be aware of one's own inner power and potentials. This can be done and tested by taking up and performing various challenging tasks for one self. In the beginning one can take up smaller and simpler tasks which can be easily completed. Once the task is completed successfully the person starts getting confidence in his own capabilities. With the building up of this confidence one can take up harder and more complicated tasks which shall further enable him to get more and more self confidence. In this way the person can built up his confidence. This can be done with strong determination and persistent efforts.

Positive attitude towards life.

The next important factor that enhances the growth of mind is a positive attitude towards life.

Some people are optimistic while some people are pessimistic. Optimistic people look at life with a different view whereas pessimistic people look at the same life situations with a different view. An optimistic person sees his life situations positively. These positive thoughts empower him to live life more effectively. On the other hand, a pessimistic person always looks at all events in life negatively which subconsciously dis-empower him and drain his mental energy. For optimistic people life is full of hopes. For them life is enjoyable and has a great potential to yield happiness. Optimistic people have developed an attitude to look for positive characters in each object and event of life whereas pessimistic people have no future hopes for life. They always trace negative characters even from positive events and objects. Optimistic people can face the worst circumstances of life with a smile on their face. They are highly confident. They are always happy while pessimistic people are never happy even when they are provided with the better circumstances in life. The optimistic people are contented while the pessimistic people are never contented with their present situation. There were two businessmen. Both of them invested their money in some business. Both of them got profit of one 100000 rupees from the business. The first businessman was optimistic. So he was very happy with the gain of 100000 rupees. The second businessman was pessimistic as he was having a negative attitude towards life. He was not happy with the profit of one 100000 rupees because he expected a profit of

200000 rupees while he only get 100000 rupees. So he perceived this profit of 100000 rupees as actually a loss in his expected profit. Because of a positive attitude the minds of optimistic persons are always calm and quiet. They are always eager to enjoy and live their life to the fullest potential. Such minds can grow further.

5] Negative characters of mind

The human mind is a very complicated and a complex part of the body. The physical body performs all the actions under the direct control of the mind. Mind is the managing director of the physical body. For achieving higher objectives and goals in life, one requires a powerful and a strong mind. It has already been discussed that positive characters can strengthen and expand mental capacity. In the same way negative characters can reduce and deteriorate mental capacity. Mind works best, at its fullest strength and capabilities, when it is quiet and peaceful. Only a quiet mind that is free from all the mental turbulences and distractions can think and plan positively and creatively. Mental turmoil, tension, stress and strain, shall distract concentration and hence block clear and creative thinking. Disturbed mind can not concentrate on the subject or problem, and concentration is the prerequisite for achieving any desired objective or goal in life. Mental turmoil and turbulences are caused by negative characters such as ego, attachment, discontentment, jealousy, anger, fear

and various delusions. The peace and the tranquility of the mind are lost because of these negative characters. Such mind cannot engage in creative and constructive thinking.

Negative characters create unwanted turmoil, stress and unrest of the mind. With the result such mind loses the capacity for concentration. Mental concentration is pre-requisite for solving complicated problem or creating new piece of art. Mental capacity will be wasted to pacify the mental stress created by negative characters. If such action continues for a longer time, it will reduce and deteriorate mental capacity. The main negative characters are ego, attachment, discontentment, jealousy, delusion, anger, fear.

Ego

The most harmful negative character is the human 'ego'. Ego is harmful to the mind directly by creating mental stress and turmoil, as well as indirectly by generating other negative feelings like irrational expectations, over attachments, jealousy and anger. Ego is a Latin word; the exact meaning of ego is 'the sense of I-ness'. It is the subjective sense of self. It is the image of the self created by the mind. This image depicts partly physical body but mainly mental image of all virtues, vices and characters of self. The mind does not like ugly, unattractive and distorted picture of the self because it is repulsive. The

picture of self created by the mind may or may not be as beautiful and strong as per the expectations. The virtues and good characters can make the picture beautiful while vices and bad characters can make it ugly. Now nobody likes an ugly picture of the self. With the result, either he has to remove the ugliness from the picture or make efforts to hide this ugliness from others. In most of the cases the mind chooses the second alternative. It tries to hide its own ugly image from the outside world. This can be done by hiding one's vices and negative characters, and at the same time, glorifying one's virtues and positive characters. The person desires to impress others by showing them this glorified and created beautiful picture of self. For this purpose his mind prepares another picture of self. This picture is not real picture, but it is modified to look more beautiful by adding different shades of colors. This is known as 'modified ego' or the falsely created image of I-ness. It is not the real picture of the self.

Now the mind carries two pictures of self on its mental screen. The first picture is the true and the faithful reflection of self and second picture is the altered, modified, beautified and colored image of self. The first picture is kept hidden; it is never shown to anybody. The second picture is for showing to the outside world. With the help of second picture human mind tries to impress others and tries to prove its own superiority over others.

The pure, pristine, unadulterated and the real sense of I-ness is the pure ego which is not harmful but the unreal sense of I-ness or the modified ego is harmful to the mind. Most of the activities and actions of the person, performed during one's life time are to protect and maintain this unreal modified ego. The person spends most of the time and energy to exhibit this modified ego. Mind has created a second false image of self which is modified and made colorful to suit one's own expectations. Gradually the person becomes so much used and conditioned to the second modified image, that he not only forgets but actually deletes the real image of self from the mental screen, and starts firmly believing that second image is actual image of self. Basically he not only desires to preserve this modified created image of self, but he expects others to believe and recognize this second false image. All his efforts are directed to protect and maintain the second modified image of self. These efforts are to show himself as a superior person, And to project himself as the owner of characters of this second image. Whenever one gets success in proving himself as a superior person, one gets deep satisfaction, at the same time if one fails to prove one's superiority then there is dissatisfaction. Whenever somebody tries to contradict this created version of self image, one feels unhappy, let down and insulted. For example, one person is basically dishonest and of doubtful integrity. But

he has created his mental picture that he is very honest. He starts firmly believing that he is honest. Now at any moment, if some other person criticizes his honesty he will not like it. He will consider it as his personal insult; this is because honesty is not his basic character. Basically he is dishonest. Honesty is the outer artificial cover to protect and hide his dishonesty. He is all the time afraid that somebody will discover his true character. With the result he will be very much conscious regarding any remark or criticism regarding dishonesty.

Basically it is the innermost instinct of the mind, to prove one's superiority over others. Different people employ different methods to prove their own superiority in the society. There are two categories of people. The first category of people, actually work hard to achieve success in life, because they strongly wish to prove their superiority, by showing their success to others. The second category of people, are hypocrites. They are inefficient and incapable of achieving any success in life. They are aware of their incapacities and inabilities. These people reroute and invest all their energies, for making false show.

The people of first category, are sincere workers. They work hard to gain material success like money, prestige, social status, power, etc. Their strong urge of getting success in life is generated from their ego. Their ego can only be satisfied when their success is known and

appreciated by the society. Their basic purpose of achieving success is to impress others. For showing their richness, they build big houses, purchase number of costly jewelries, costly clothes, keep number of cars, etc. This is done to create impression on others by showing their own richness. Such people give donation for various social causes, but their donations are mainly for getting prestige. They are very particular to see that the act of their donation should be acknowledged and appreciated by others.

In the same way, some people gain knowledge of various subjects. The act of gaining knowledge is not generated out of their inner yearning or curiosity for knowing more but it is generated out of a desire to impress others by their own knowledge. Such a desire can only be satisfied when they get a platform to give lectures to other people on the subject of their knowledge. In all fields of life people are trying hard to achieve certain goals, reach certain heights of success, but they are not satisfied unless, it is properly recognized and appreciated by the society.

The people of second category are incapable of getting spectacular success in life. They are inefficient, in spite of their inefficiency; they do possess the same instinct of proving their superiority. So they adopt wrong methods to impress others. Even though they are not rich, they borrow money from others and then try to show their false richness. Such persons may not have enough money to feed their families but

whatever little money they possess they will spend for showing others. People purchase costly cloths, jewelries, cars etc, even though they can not afford it. Their main aim is to make a false show. A person, who has little knowledge of the subject, will try to impress others by showing that he is the master of the subject.

Both these categories of people live a stressful life. The first category is trying hard for their entire life, to get success for the mere purpose of impressing others and the second category spend their whole life for making false show. Both the categories can not get real peace of mind and pure joy of life.

There is also a third category of people, who are not inclined to impress others by proving their superiority. Such people never create a second false image of self in their mind. They recognize their pure image of self and joyfully accept it. They never try to modify and to make a more colorful picture of self. They accept their self image as it is. Such people are not dependent on the opinions of others for themselves. So with the effect there is no need to impress others. These types of people are the real saints. They live with happiness and peace in their minds. They gain the knowledge, for the sake of gaining knowledge and not to impress other people. They achieve mastery in art, not to impress others, but to get deep joy out of it. *Shree Hariprasad* was the teacher of a great musician *Tansen*. He was a great singer, but he never sang for others, he sang

for himself and for his Almighty. He never cared to get appreciation either from the King or from people. A *Rishi* known as *Astavakra* was having a disfigured body, he was very ugly in his outward appearance. But he never cared to impress others by trying to remove his ugliness but he accepted his physical ugliness. He was a great scholar and wrote a great literature known as '*Astavakra Gita*' which has thrown new light on the Indian philosophy.

So ego is a negative character which reduces and deteriorates mental capacity. Ego exhibits itself in different forms. The first form of ego is possession. The greater the number of possessions more is the satisfaction of ego. A person considers his wife as a type of his personal possession. Hence he tends to select outwardly good looking wife so that her beauty can be appreciated among his friends and own circle, such appreciation will satisfy his ego. Other possessions are a person's friends and relatives. A person is more and more satisfied with bigger and bigger circle of his contacts. This type of possessions creates a feeling of 'my-ness'. So now 'I-ness' is attached with 'my-ness'. Formerly he was worried about satisfying self but now he has to worry to satisfy those who are in the circle of 'my-ness'. With the result his activities are increased. This feeling of my-ness is called attachments. As per Hindu philosophy these attachments are known as '*Asakti*'. '*Asakti*' is

nothing but extended ego. Over a period of time a person becomes attached to the people and objects within his circle of 'my-ness' with invisible threads of bondages which in turn creates a spider like web around him from which he is unable to free himself.

Ego can be surfaced in the form of jealousy also. As such jealousy is the modified form of ego. The basic instinct of showing superiority over others is the root cause for jealousy. Jealousy is created by the act of comparing the self with others. If other person is obviously more superior to self, then it creates the feeling of jealousy. Person cannot be jealous of the person who is inferior to him. As such whenever a person comes in contact with another person who is inferior to him, he gets pleasure because his inner personal ego is satisfied. Jealousy can be exhibited in many forms. Some people would like to increase their own capacities and possessions to show their superiority. If neighbor has brought a beautiful car, then he would like to have a car costlier than that of his neighbor. If friend has a big house, then he would like to have a house bigger than that of his friend. If a person is not capable of reaching the materialistic heights as that of his friends then he will try some other means of proving his superiority. The easiest way of proving one's superiority over others, is to criticize him, to find out some defect or fault, and inflate that defect, and show it to the people. In this negative way, one can show other fellow's inferiority and

self superiority. If the other person is richer and the first person can not reach to that level of richness; then he will try to find out some defect for criticism. The most commonly criticized character is morality. So he may say that the other person may be rich, but his method of achieving money is not righteous.

Ego is harmful and injurious for healthy development of the mind. It creates stress, strain and mental turmoil. Such people are incapable of creating or achieving higher planes of creativity and spirituality in life. The easiest way to remove ego is to know the inner-self, to know real 'I' and to draw the real picture of self and then to accept this picture. This can be done with help of meditation.

Attachment

The second negative character, which is harmful for the development of mind, is emotional attachments. Emotional attachment can be with living or can be with non living possessions. It is the emotional bond which creates bilateral relationship. Human-ego or 'I-ness', is extended as feeling of 'my-ness'. 'I' can not live without 'my'. When child is born he is not aware of the feeling of 'I' or 'my'. Gradually with the development of mind, he starts getting the sense of 'I'. As the child grows he becomes aware of his image of 'I'. Then he starts becoming aware of his circle of 'my-ness' which first starts with his

mother and over a period of time extends to his father, brother, sister, friends, toys; etc. The same sense of my-ness remains in his mind, throughout his life time. In the childhood he was possessive of his toys, now the toys are replaced by his property, money, cars etc. The same 'my-ness' extends to friends, relatives, wife, in-laws, subordinates, followers etc. The feeling of my-ness is very common. It creates an emotional bond. As far as it is an emotional link, it is not harmful. But when it becomes bondage, it is harmful. One can have emotional attachment with another person. Inter personal relationship can not be developed without emotional attachment, but this attachment should not be so strong that the person can not live without that specific object of attachment. It is observed that in the beginning the attachment is not strong but gradually it becomes stronger. After some time a person becomes so much attached to another person, or object, that he becomes totally dependent on that person or object for his happiness. The object of dependence can be his friend, his wife, his mother, father or anybody. It can be an image of God or it can be a non-living article. In such cases, person is totally dependent and so much attached that he can not live without his object of attachment. Most of his activities rotate around this pivot of attachment without which he cannot live his life. He becomes totally dependent and a slave of this object of attachment. This is called as bondage. This can be named as '*Raga*' in the

Hindu philosophy. ‘*Raga*’ means deep and strong ‘attachment’. The opposite of ‘*Raga*’ is *Dwesh*. *Raga* is the positive attachment and *Dwesh* is the negative attachment. Both are harmful. Such attachments create mental turbulences. Mind is occupied with the thoughts of maintaining and nurturing those attachments, and keeping those possessions. Mind is afraid to lose these possessions. If by chance these attachments are broken, then the person gets emotional trauma. His internal ego is hurt. So for the maintenance of peace and tranquility of mind, it is better to be free from all such bondages.

This bondage is known as ‘Asakti’. Ego is called ‘Aham’ and ‘Aham’ along with ‘Asakti’ creates ‘Maya’. ‘Maya’ in turn creates ‘Bandhan’. ‘Bandhan’ means loss of freedom. Loss of freedom creates slavery and slavery can not give happiness or quietude.

Discontentment

The third negative character of the mind is discontentment. Absence of contentment is known as discontentment. Contentment is the feeling of satisfaction, or more specifically feeling of satisfaction with available means and resources. Satisfaction is the sense of pleasure, one gets mainly at the time of fulfillment of a desire.

The human mind is full of desires. There is no end to human desires and fulfillment of desires is

a 'never ending process'. There are numerous desires lying dormant in our subconscious mind that those desires come to surface and become active one after another in the conscious mind. The fulfillment of the first desire after a temporary latent period will soon give birth to the second desire in the mind. And this second desire is always bigger than the first one. A person may have desire to purchase one scooter. But as soon as he will be in a position to purchase a scooter, he will desire to have a car. Once his second desire to purchase a car is fulfilled, he will desire to have a more costly and a luxurious car. In the same way the chain of desires will be generated in his mind. This chain of reaction continues till he reaches to the point where he will have such a big desire which can not be fulfilled. The whole human life is wasted to fulfill different desires. This is because person gets sense of happiness when his desire is fulfilled. But this happiness is short lived. When desire is fulfilled, then there is temporary sense of happiness, but this happiness lasts only till the birth of the next desire. On the birth of the second desire, he will forget his happiness of the first desire. He will now again struggle hard for fulfilling his second desire. Again when the second desire is fulfilled, he will get a sense of happiness, but this feeling of happiness lasts only till the birth of the third desire. In this way he will reach to the point, when his desire will be so big that he will not be in a position to fulfill it and then he will remain in a state of

unhappiness due to non fulfillment of his desires. So ultimately it proves that desires are the root cause of unhappiness. If this process is again observed in detail, it will be noticed that happiness derived after fulfillment of desire, is actually not because of desire fulfillment, but it is due to the absence of desires in the mind. Broader analysis will show that it is not the fulfillment of desires but it is the situation of absence of desires in the mind that generates the feeling of happiness. This is because desires create mental turbulences whereas absence of desire leads to mental quietude and tranquility.

Now the person, who is contented with available means and resources, will have less chance to have any desire to get more because he is contented with whatever he possesses. With the effect such a person's mind will remain quiet. He won't have mental turbulences to get more. When the mind is quiet one gets a sense of happiness and satisfaction. Hence the period of desirelessness, is the period of happiness. Only a calm and quiet mind can enjoy happiness. Such a mind can think something positive, something creative. On the contrary a discontented mind is always in search of getting more and more. Such mind will never rest. Such mind will be full of mental turbulences and disturbances. So it can not have time and energy to think some thing positive or creative. This feeling of discontentment erodes and can weaken the mind.

Jealousy

The fourth negative character of mind is jealousy. Jealousy is the bitter feeling created in the mind, when the person sees better qualities in other person. Most of the time, such feeling is created for near contacts. A person may be jealous of his friend, neighbor or relative, specifically when his friend, neighbor or relative achieves more than what he himself has achieved. The feeling of jealousy is mainly for material achievements such as wealth, power, prestige or social status. For example, a poor person is jealous of his rich neighbors or a woman may be jealous of another women, who is more beautiful then her. As such jealousy is intimately connected with personal ego. Each person is willing to expand his ego and everybody desires to be bigger and better than others in each field of life. This feeling of 'bigness' gives satisfaction to his personal ego. But there are no established standards for "Bigness". There are no specifications earmarked by the society to stamp the person as "Big". Hence everybody compares his own 'bigness' to the 'bigness' of his near contacts that may be his friend, relative, neighbor or acquaintance. When he finds his near contact 'bigger' in any respect than himself he feels "smaller" in his own eyes. Hence with the effect his ego is hurt. He develops bitter feelings for that person. This is jealousy. Jealousy is the negative character because it creates unwanted mental turbulence. It creates unrest in the mind.

Once the person is jealous of another person, then consciously or unconsciously he tries to project himself to be bigger. If that is not possible, then he will try to make the other person appear smaller than himself. Either of the way, he has to work hard for proving his own superiority.

The person, who is more conscious regarding his personal ego, can easily become jealous of another person. Such a person's mind can not remain calm and quiet and hence he can never experience true feeling of mental happiness and bliss.

Delusion:

The fifth negative character of the mind is delusion. Delusion means firm but false belief, held in spite of realities contrary to the belief. Delusion is the resultant outcome of false perception of reality. It may be due to irrational thinking and wrong traditional heritage.

For example, some persons are of the firm belief that No.13 is an unlucky number. This belief is based on the knowledge gained from his forefathers. There are no real or rational reasons for a particular number to be lucky and another number to be unlucky. This is the delusion created by the mind and hence this person will never purchase a flat with the number 13 or will avoid taking room no 13 in a hotel. Such

delusions persist in all fields of life. Delusions are false beliefs and may exist in relation to religion, health, social life, commerce, industries etc. All superstitions are nothing but a type of delusions. There is an example of a well known cricketer who would always look towards the sun before starting his batting. It was his delusion that if he looks towards the sun while going for batting he will fair well. There are top level actors and politicians and leaders, having different types of delusions. Most of the people believe that the horoscopes of a boy and a girl should match, if they are planning to get married. As such there are no scientific or statistical evidence exists to prove that compatibility in the marriage depends upon design of the horoscope.

Most of the people have delusions related to themselves. Each one believes that he is the main important centre of the universe and whole universe revolves around him. He firmly believes that he himself is very important, and so the other persons, surrounding him should behave as per his expectations. In reality nobody is important on this earth. If one considers the vastness of this universe in time and space dimensions, then he realizes that he is just a drop in the ocean.

Each person is carrying different delusions for himself. Somebody thinks he is the most intelligent person, another individual thinks he is the most handsome of all, still another thinks he is the most educated etc. Such delusions keep the person away from reality. His eyes are closed

to reality and he continues living in the state of his peculiar delusions. Such minds are not healthy minds and such minds are fixed on various delusions. With the effect such minds are not open to receive new ideas and principles. Such people become disturbed when they have to face reality, which are contrary to their delusions. Such people create the situation of life that helps them to live up to their delusions.

Anger

Anger is a psychosomatic reaction. It is a deep rooted feeling of displeasure, and frustrations due to failure in life. This failure may be due to various reasons. Anger may be due to unfulfilled desires, may be due to unmet expectations or may be due to unexpected insults. Basically, this is the mental reaction. When a person strongly believes in his capabilities for fulfilling certain tasks and if he is unable to perform or achieve his goals due to some unknown cause or factor he gets the feeling of anger because this hurts his self esteem. The person, who is aware of his limitations, can accept his failure with calm and a cool mind, but the person who is having wrong beliefs as regards his capabilities and can have a very high self esteem, with the result he can not withstand failures in his life. For him failure means distrust to his own self image. He has created a false and an inflated image of himself. Any occasion or incidence tainting this image will

generate the feeling of anger. Anger is basically an animal instinct. This feeling creates reaction of fight or flight. When any animal meets with any danger, he has to fight the danger or run-away for the purpose of survival. Hence with the feeling of anger, the body reacts and prepares itself for the purpose of fight or flight. Muscles require more energy hence more blood is supplied to the muscles. Hence there is an increase in the heart rate and the heart beats more forcefully. The demand for oxygen by the blood is increased. Hence in order to meet with this increased demand there is an increase in the rate of respiration. For fight one requires to see more accurately. So pupils get dilated. Also because of higher flow of blood in the peripheral muscles, the body temperature gets elevated. For counterbalancing the rise in the temperature there will be more perspiration. These all are the body reactions to prepare the animal for the purpose of either fight or flight. Most of the animals are not having a sense of self-image or ego. So they get angry only when they sense a danger to their life. But human beings are more conscious regarding their self-image, with the result the feeling of anger pervades the human mind not only at the time of danger to their lives, but also when they feel their self-image and self esteem is in danger. Hence human beings are more at risk, to the onslaught of angry feelings. Repeated attacks of anger, creates disturbance and turbulence in the mind. And if the mind

remains disturbed for a longer period, it loses its mental capacity and capabilities. Such repeated attacks of anger damage various organs of the body. Such persons are more prone to hypertension and heart-attacks.

FEAR

Fear is the most basic mental response of a man. Fear in its various forms and degrees are the response of the man to the threat arousing out of the feeling of insecurity. It is the fear of losing something that he already possesses. As such fear is the natural emotional response of a living organism against any kind of threat to their life. The feeling of fear triggers the mental and physical reaction that helps the organism for fight or flight against danger. So indirectly it helps in preserving life. Men can think about the future and can take proper security measures against expected dangers. Most of the human developments are initiated by this sense of security.

The feeling of fear is good but when it is exaggerated or when it is out of proportion to the factual danger or when it is purely imaginary, it creates mental stress and anxiety.

Fear is always for losing something. Some people have the fear of losing their property or wealth. Some people have fear of losing their social prestige or reputation. Some people have fear of losing their power. Some people have fear of losing their near and dear ones. Some have the fear of

dreadful diseases or accidents, which depicts their fear of losing their health. But the greatest fear of man is the fear of losing their life that is the fear of death. Actually all of us consider our body as our real self. Therefore extinction of body is the extinction of self. Hence this is our greatest fear.

Now let us understand the psychodynamics of fear in the human being as regards its origin, its development and consequences. Fear is generally for the future. There can not be any fear for the past events. However our future fears are based on our experiences of the past. As such it is the mental projection of past miserable and dreadful experiences. Based on the past experience human mind creates horrifying visions for the future that are either untrue or exaggerated. If for example a person is insulted by some government officer in the past, he will always be afraid to visit any government office. As such all government officers are not so arrogant and rude by nature.

Human mind always thinks regarding any object or event by creating visual images on the mental screen. These created mental pictures can arouse a feeling of pleasure, sorrow, or fear. For example, if the mind creates the image of a beautiful sea beach then such an image will arouse the feeling of pleasure but creating image of death of some near or dear ones will give the feeling of sorrow. In the same way, when the mind creates an image of some danger on the mental screen then it will trigger the feeling of fear in the mind. Such a

feeling of fear will be directly proportionate to the danger value of the object or event. The image of losing the wallet will not arouse that much fear as compared to the image of being severely hurt in the motor accident. The danger value of the future event or object depends upon the past experience. The child may not be afraid of the fire if he has not experienced the injurious effects of the same even though the factual danger value of fire is quite high. Most of the children are afraid of ghosts because the danger value of ghosts has been raised by their parents by telling them horrifying stories of ghosts. For creating fearful images on the mind two factors are essential. The first factor is memory of the past painful and bad experiences and the second is some present event, object or thought which brings the past painful event to the present conscious mind. For example, if the person is badly bitten by the dog in the past he will always get the feeling of fear whenever he sees the dog because as soon as he sees the dog his mind will start creating the image of a biting dog on his mental screen and such an image will arouse the feeling of fear. Fear can be classified into two types. First those that are based on facts and reality and the second type of fears which are imaginary and are not based on reality. Most of the fears are under the second category. Any normal person would have a fear of jumping from the tenth floor or putting his hands in the fire because in these cases the person knows that either he would die or would break his bones or

will get burns on the hand. Such fears are based on reality. These fears are normal and are essential for survival but when the person is so fearful that he cannot even carry out his normal activities in the life then it is abnormal and requires attention. For example, if the person is so scared of fire that he won't go near to gas or stove for cooking or if he is so scared of accidents that he will never travel in any vehicle or cannot cross the road or if the person is so scared of heights that he will avoid going in the office situated on the tenth floor; then, such fears are abnormal. The mind that is constantly under stress and full of fear is not a healthy mind. For removing the feeling of fear from the mind one should be aware of the appropriate danger value of the objects of danger. If it is factual danger then one should take appropriate actions for proper security but if it is purely imaginary or if it is an exaggerated imaginations of the factual dangers; then one should convince oneself regarding futility of these fearful imaginations. As soon as the mind is convinced regarding the futility of the object of danger, the false fear will disappear from the mind by itself. The best way to know the futility of the object of danger is to aptly understand, analyze and quantify the actual danger value of the object. Most of the time, our mind has the habit of exaggerating the danger value of any object or event. So if the process is reversed, and if that exaggerated danger value, is removed from the mind, the fear will disappear. This is similar to

deleting the danger value from the hard disc of the mind. The mind that is free of fear has a higher reserve of energy which in turn releases the inner creative energy of the person.

6] POWER OF MIND

Mind is more subtler than body. As such the physical body acts as per the instructions and order of the mind. Physical body is servant and mind is the master. Only a master has the power to take decisions. It is also observed that the physical body and mind are interconnected. Both have a profound effect on each other. A healthy and a strong mind can produce a healthy body and vice-versa. A person with a very weak mind may not possess an internally strong body. In the same way a person who has been physically ill for a long time also becomes mentally sick over a period of time. Despite this mind-body interconnections and inter dependability, mind is always far superior than the body. If one reads the history, it will be seen that most of the successful and influential people such as *Buddha, Mahavir, Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, Shankaracharya, Abraham Lincoln, etc;* had very strong and determinate minds. All these people may not be having a very strong physical body but they were successful because they had very strong minds. A strong and a healthy mind is the basic requirement for all those who desire to make great achievements in their life. Hence all those people

who are highly ambitious for success, either material or spiritual, must possess very strong and a healthy minds.

Now the question arises in one's mind as to how can one can make the mind stronger and healthier. Before knowing the ways of making a strong mind, one should have a clear idea as to what does one mean by a strong mind and how mental strength can be measured.

It is the rule of science that when one wants to measure the quality of any material object then one must have a clear parameter for the same. For example, length and breadth can be measured in meters or kilometers. Weight can be measured in milligrams, grams, kilograms, or tons. Sound is measured in decibels. If meters, grams, and decibels are called parameters for measuring specific qualities of specific material objects, then, in the same way, if one wants to measure the strength of mind, there has to be certain parameters by which strength of mind can be measured.

Parameters for measuring mental capacities

The parameters for measuring the strength of mind are very fine and subtle which often get depicted in certain incidences of daily life of a person. Hence broadly speaking the five measures for the strength of mind are willpower, memory, intelligence, receptivity and creativity. So a strong mind should have a strong will power, a vast memory, a sharp intelligence and easy receptivity and high creativity.

Let us now understand each of these parameters in more detail.

A) Will Power:

Will power is the power to will; and the ability and strength of the mind to carry out one's decision's, wishes or plans. It is the faculty of the mind by which one deliberately chooses or decides a course of action. Without a strong will power no work can be done, no task can be fulfilled, no objective can be achieved, no target can be reached and no ambition can be fulfilled. A strong will power helps the person for making speedy decisions and provides strength to carry out the actions as per the decisions made.

Main factors affecting and responsible for mental will power are self confidence and quality of will. A person who lacks self confidence also has a weak will power. Self confidence is the confidence for self. It is the mental awareness of self capabilities. People who always underestimate themselves and who always expect failure in all their endeavors are basically mentally weak. They always think that they are incapable and inefficient in doing certain tasks.

For example, there was one lion cub. By chance this baby lion got separated from her mother. At the same time there was one flock of goats passing on the road. The lion's cub got mixed with them and as days passed, it started growing with the goats. In physical appearance it was like a lion but mentally it was weak and feeble like a goat. It had never learned to hunt and face danger. Once it met some lions.

They told him, that he is not a goat but a lion and that he should behave like a lion. They took him on a hunting adventure with them. At that time his entire mental picture about himself changed. His mind became aware of his own capabilities. In the same way many people are not aware of their own inner potential and hence they have no self confidence. The individuals having no confidence lack determination. It is said that a mind conceives what it believes.

As such a mind can only determine to fulfill any task, provided the mind is convinced regarding its self-capabilities. Mental conviction of capabilities and capacities of self is self confidence. This self confidence will enhance mental determination.

B) Memory

This is the second parameter which determines the efficiency and the strength of mind. Memory is the mental faculty to remember. Human mind receives at any point of time a stream of information through various sense organs. All the information is not registered on the mental screen. Some of this information passes unnoticed. And some of the information is registered in a short term memory register which is kept over there for a very short period. This short term information is required to be used for some specific purpose only. For example when one travels in a train one chit-chats and shares food with other fellow travelers. But as soon as the journey is over, within a very short period our

mind forgets the faces of these co travelers. Same way during train journey one does remember the timings of the train's departure and arrival, but as soon as the journey is over the same is forgotten. A very small part of the information received and which is important as well as interesting to self is stored in the long term memory box.

Memory is not only useful but also essential for most of the bodily and mental functions. Let us take a simple example of walking. The function of walking requires complicated mechanism of contractions of calf muscles at different time intervals. When a small child learns to walk his mind learns all the techniques for it. Then the same is kept in the memory box and whenever the person requires walking the mind utilizes the same experience, repeating the same series of commands to different muscles. This is all done at the subconscious level and hence the person who intends to walk does not consciously have to remember his past experience. For talking in the mother tongue one requires to remember number of words, the meaning of words, the grammar of that language, the style of articulating specific words etc. Memory is required for solving problems, analyzing data, performing arithmetic calculations, maintaining social relations, etc. All the functions of body and mind depend upon memory. If memory is lost the person will not remember his own identity, his relations, and his family members. He will not be in a position to speak any language. He will not be able to remember his past and so he cannot plan for

his future. This is the reason why faculty for memory is very important and essential for life. Memory helps the students to pass exams, it helps professionals to gain experience and success in life, it helps the writer to write better and it helps the artists to perform better. Hence it is a very important and an essential faculty of mind. Those who don't have good memory cannot be successful in any field of life.

Most of the people believe that memory is inborn, that is, it is natural gift which is present since birth and it cannot be developed in later life. It is proved medically that everybody is born with a fixed capacity of mind's memory but only a few people develop this faculty to their advantage, while the rest of the people are not trying to develop it.

There are certain facts regarding memory which if understood shall help us in tapping and exploring one of the most important mental faculty that is memory. The first thing that we must understand is that human mind has a fixed and limited capacity to store information. So if a person tries to store unimportant and trivial information, then there will not be enough space in the brain to store more important information. For example, one need not waste their mental energy for remembering telephone numbers or car numbers. This information can be easily stored in a separate diary.

Secondly information can only be stored in the memory box, if enough attention is paid to it while registering the information. This requires attentive concentration of the mind while receiving

the information. Seeing the picture casually, will not make any impression on the mind but if the same picture is seen with full concentration and attention then it will remain in the memory box for longer time.

Thirdly, only those objects and subjects where a person has personal interests and priorities, will be stored and registered in the memory box. For example, it is seen that people easily forget certain things, which does not interest them. For example a gentleman who returns home tired from the office in the evening easily forgets to purchase the grocery for the house but he would always remember to buy his usual pack of cigarettes.

The fourth factor that enhances memory is repetitions. Hence students read certain books again and again for their exams so as to remember the same.

Another known fact about memory is that certain people have a better visual memory and can remember better with visual impressions and certain people have a better auditory memory and can remember better with auditory impressions.

Also it is essential to realize that mind does not store any information in the form of written words. It stores the impressions in the form of images created by the mind. Pens, books, calculators, animals are not stored as written words but their images are stored in the mind as visual impressions. Hence visual impressions are better than the written words. So if one desires to enhance his memory then he should have a better capacity to form images in the

mind. It is observed that it is more difficult to remember numbers than names because numbers have no specific shapes to make an impression on the mental screen. Brain stores different types of information in different compartments and so one must do sorting and filing of information to facilitate its working. One who knows the technique of sorting and filing the information can store more information in the brain.

Information received by the brain is never stored in the brain as independent information. It is always connected with certain other information and that information in turn is connected to some third information. In this way a network of information is created in the mind. For example, for remembering passwords, everybody applies different methods. One may relate the password with the name of the God. For remembering the name of the God he may relate it with the religion of his faith. Hence memory is a very important faculty and parameter of the mind and it can be developed by properly coaching and training the mind.

C) Intelligence

This is the third parameter which qualifies the power of the mind. In simple words, it is the ability to acquire and apply knowledge. It is the mental faculty of reasoning, understanding, analyzing and evaluating objectively especially with regard to abstract or academic matters. It is the power of mind which is helpful to find solutions to problems.

Human life does not travel on a smooth and a straight road. There are a number of turns and curves, hurdles and unexpected difficulties and problems on that road. So the mind should be capable of directing the body to overcome these hurdles and difficulties so as to make the travel smoother and pleasurable.

Nature has endowed a special gift to the human mind, that is, intelligence with the help of which one can acquire success in life. This success may be either material or spiritual. Intelligence is useful for understanding the root causes for problems and finding intelligent solutions for the same with the help of previous experiences and knowledge. Previous experiences and knowledge is the databank of information stored in the mental memory section. Hence a good memory helps intelligence. As such finding solutions to problems is a very complicated procedure. The mind takes the help of other mental faculties such as memory, receptivity and creativity to find the solution to problems. The ability of the mind to interconnect various faculties of mind, to reach to the bottom of the problem, to understand the extent of the problem, to find out a logical solutions to the problem keeping in mind the past knowledge and experiences, and to further forecast its future effects, and finally to prevent its adverse effects is called intelligence.

It is believed that intelligence is inborn or hereditary. Number of surveys has been carried out by various researchers but no conclusive evidence has been found out for it. With systemic and

constant training of the mind one can develop and expand the faculty of intelligence.

D) Creativity

The fourth parameter of mind is creativity. It is the highest faculty of the brain. Creativity means the ability to create new things. Most of the artists, poets, writers, photographers, singers and scientists have a very high creative and innovative power. Creative minds are capable of forming clear mental images of what they want to create in the future. For example, the painter has the ability to see the picture that he is going to draw in future on his mental screen. He can visualize the beautiful colors and their appearances. He can visualize all the shapes and their contours. He is thus able to visualize the final outcome of his picture even before he begins to work on it. Scientists do research to find innovative solutions to various human problems. They are able to visualize the comfort and hassle free life in future on finding innovative solutions to the various problems facing humanity as a whole. Their minds are highly creative and innovative and always busy in doing research to make various breakthrough discoveries.

A creative mind, utilizes its knowledge, experience and skill for creation. Creativity gives one, a sense of deep inner pleasure and fulfillment.

Will power, memory power, analytical thinking and creative thinking are four basic components of mind. With the help of these four

components, mind can achieve any desired goal in life. The goals may be either material or spiritual. For the material gain, for success in worldly life, one has to plan, fix priorities, choose methodology, and should work accordingly. If there is systematic and persistent effort, success is certain. In the same way for spiritual happiness, one requires higher quality of perception, thinking, understanding and regular practice. Only those people who are committed in life to achieving their spiritual goals and who possess in abundance the above four components can rise spiritually in their lifetime.

These four components can never work independently. They are complimentary with each other. For success in any sphere of life, one requires to have a strong will power. Will power is based on self confidence, the confidence on self that “I can also do it”. For solving any problems, one requires an analytical mind. Analytical thinking is based on previous knowledge and experience which in turn is based on memory power. Once the problem is solved, one can plan for future steps, which requires creative thinking. So in short for the achievement of any goal in life, either material or spiritual, one requires to have a strong and efficient mind with abundance of the above four qualities of the mind.

7] Mental development

Now the question is how does one develop, tap and canalize the tremendous mental power that one possesses.

This is very simple. What are the steps to make our body strong? The way to build a strong body is a nutritious diet and regular exercise. In the same way the mind can be made strong by a nutritious diet and a proper exercise. For the mind the diet consists of our knowledge, based on our vast reading and experiences and the exercise for the mind lies in training the mind by first deconditioning it and then reconditioning, and learning different methodologies for living a fuller and a fulfilling life. Hence one's mind can be made strong and more efficient by feeding it on a proper, high value and nutritious diet of our knowledge and experience and by exercising it on the treadmill of life by proper training and conditioning of the mind.

Yoga is nothing but the process of first deconditioning and then reconditioning of the mind. Our mind is full of wrong ideas, unimportant and useless knowledge, deviated perceptions and faulty prejudices. Right from the childhood, we have been taught wrong methods of learning. We are pouring unwanted, unimportant and unnecessary information constantly into the mind, considering it as a recycle bin. This information is poured into the mind via various avenues such as unreal and irrational literature, movies etc. In this way the hard disc of the mind gets occupied by irrelevant data and hence one is not able to tap the rich mental potential for more resourceful and innovative work. Also the mind thus develops many faulty perceptions and prejudices which hamper and block further mental

development. Our perception is never rational; it is always colored and modified with artificial colors based on our past experiences with the effect we have no chance to perceive the right things in the present scenario. If we have a strong inner urge to develop our mind, to explore and expand our vital energy, and if we desire to bring out our latent powers and potential, then we have no option left but to make a radical change in the way we perceive, analyze and evaluate various dimensions of our life and living.

Whenever we build something new we have to do a cleansing job of removing the old faulty techniques and ideas learnt by our mind during our journey of life, that is, we have to remove all unwanted, unimportant, unnecessary information from memory box of mind, so that more space is available for more important and vital information. We have to thus unlearn wrong techniques of perception and thinking, so that right techniques can be learnt. This cleansing process of the mind is called catharsis or *Nadi shudhi* in the yogic language.

8] Yoga and Mental Development

Shree Patanjali, who is the founder of yoga, has systematically and scientifically arranged all the steps of yoga which ultimately can lead to the final aim of life. *The yoga preached by Patanjali is called Raj Yoga or Ashtang Yoga.* It is called *Astang yoga*, because it contains eight steps to be practiced.

These eight steps are *yama*, *niyama*, *asan*, *pratyahar*, *pranayam*, *dharna*, *dhyān* and *samadhi*.

Yama

Yama stands for the positive characters that are to be adopted by the yogi. There are certain behavioral characters, a Yogi has to cultivate in life. There are five *yama*, described by *Acharya Patanjali* which are *Satya*, *Ahimsa*, *Asteya*, *Brahmacharya*, and *Aparigraha*. *Satya* means truthfulness, *Ahimsa* means non-violence, *Asteya* means non-stealing, *Brahmacharya* means self discipline, and *Aparigraha* means not to expect and not to accept any thing from others.

Niyama

Niyamas are the rules to be followed by a yogi. These are *shaucha*, *santosh*, *tapa*, *swadhyaya* and *ishwar pranidhanam*. *Shaucha* means cleanliness both of body and mind, *Santosh* means contentment, *Tapa* means continuous and regular practice, *Swadhyaya* means gaining knowledge and *Ishwar-pranidhanam* means complete trust in the almighty.

Asana

Asana is the practice of assuming special postures that help to make the body, more efficient and

energetic so that it can perform various yogic practices.

Pranayam

Pranayama is the process of controlling one's breathing. There are various types of *pranayam* that can be practiced by the yogi. The aim of *pranayam* is to control one's thought process and to canalize one's energies for the higher purposes of life.

Pratyahara

Pratyahara is the process of withdrawing all the senses from the outside world so as to be able to concentrate on the inward journey of mind.

Dharna

Dharana means the concentration of mind which is the prerequisite for the subsequent stages of *Dhyan* and *Samadhi*.

Dhyan

Dhyan means meditation which has been advocated by Acharya Patanjali as a part of his RajYoga.

Samadhi

Samadhi is the final and ultimate goal of Raj Yoga which leads to mental quietude, bliss and eternal joy.

9] Yama

There are five positive characters or 'yamas' which are essential for the sadhaka. Sadhaks are those who are disciples of yoga, and those who desire to achieve highest stage of mind. These characters are like nutrients or vitamins for the mind and are responsible for keeping the mind calm and quiet.

Ahinsa

The first character or *yama* is non-violence. Violence means the act of causing injury to somebody either mental or physical. Non-violence is the absence of violence. One can either physically beat the person which can cause body injury or one can insult or ill-treat the person to hurt him mentally. As such violence is the outcome of deep rooted revenge and hatred. The internal feelings of violence are more harmful than act of violence. The person with deep rooted feeling of revenge and hatred sows the seeds of violence in the mind. This instinct may germinate and sprout or may not germinate and sprout. A person who is physically weak may not be in a position to exhibit his feelings of violence and hence he may not be in a position to react as per his instinct, but his mind is always full

of thoughts of violence. The violent instincts of the mind cause mental turbulence. This instinct when it persists over a period of time, leads to a series of such mental turbulences. These turbulences cause a ripple effect and lead to profound mental stress. Much of mental energy is utilized for maintaining and nurturing the feeling of hatred and revenge. Such a person can not concentrate on any creative thoughts, as his mind is never calm and quiet. .

The first *yama* of non-violence can only be achieved when the mind is calm, cool, composed and clear similar to the waters of a pond. The absence of revenge, hatred and enmity gives more space in life for love and compassion towards other fellow human beings. The person, whose mind is full of compassion, can never think about injuring others, hence all religions on earth have preached for compassion for others. The bible says that 'love thy neighbors as thy self'. Love and compassion, are the signs of humanity. These characters are not only helpful for creating human bondage, but they are also beneficial to self as it gives a deep sense of joy, pleasure and security in life. It creates a calm, quiet and tranquil mind which is necessary for achieving the higher aims in yoga.

Satya

The second character presented by *Shree Patanjali* is 'Satya'. It is the sum total of truthfulness, integrity and honesty. People are in the habit of creating wrong and narrow meaning of 'Satya'. They believe

that '*Satya*' means speaking the truth but this is only a small part of the whole. The wide meaning of truth is true thinking, true speaking and true acting. The person should be integrated in his thought speech and action. Most of the time person thinks something, speaks something else and acts quite differently. There is no integration to his thought, speech and action; with the result their behavior and way of life become artificial. This kind of hypocritical behavior creates split personality. Split personality creates conflict and dilemma in their mind. Such people would try to hide the truth, for their own selfish motive. Their mind is all the time busy making exaggerated and false show of the self. Such person makes show to impress others. Person with little knowledge may try to show that he is master of the subject. Person having number of vices may try to hide his bad characters, imperfections and weaknesses. Such an action will not help him to build his own positive character. *Satya* carries a definite and distinct meaning in the Sanskrit language. It is the sum total of truthfulness, integrity and honesty. There exists two types of truths, one is absolute truth and the second is relative truth. The absolute truth is very difficult to perceive by ordinary people. It has been mentioned by Sir William Osler that 'in seeking the absolute truth, we aim at the un-attainable, and must be content with broken portions'. This is because perceptivity differs with different people and perceptivity differs with the same person at different periods of time. Hence different people would

perceive the same reality in a different way depending on their own past knowledge, experience and family culture. Also it has been observed that the same reality can change with the same person at different periods of his life time depending upon certain new experiences and knowledge of the object, situation or person over a period of time. A person when he perceives the same reality falsely many times, then he starts believing that this reality which he perceives is the absolute truth. This polluted perception will be responsible for creating definite impression in the mind that will become his permanent concept and conviction. This makes the person rigid and adamant in behavior.

A Yogi has to learn to develop his own neutral perception, a perception that is free of prejudice, so that he can get true knowledge regarding the outside world and all the facts of life.

. So for the person who is *Sadhaka*, who wants to learn yoga, it is absolutely necessary that he should observe and practice 'Satya' in his life.

Brahmacharya

The third *yama*, preached by *Shree Patanjali*, is 'Brachmacharya'. The meaning of *Brachmacharya* is attitude for getting highest knowledge (Brahma) of life and death i.e. highest philosophical knowledge. In Hindu philosophy, the person's life is divided in four stages. These parts are called Ashram.

These are *Bramcharyashram*, *Gruhashthashram*, *Vanprasthashram*, *Sanyasashram*. In the first stage i.e. up to age of 20, the child is supposed to learn, supposed to get education. During this period he should keep himself away from worldly materialistic desires i.e. *Kama*. His mind should be engaged only in getting more and more knowledge. He must concentrate on getting more knowledge and should abstain from luxuries of life. If he engages in enjoying the luxuries of life, he can not concentrate on his studies. So he should abstain from the worldly pleasures. In the same way the learner of Yoga must abstain from all the luxuries of life. He must have self control over desires which can be a hindrance in his progress studying the yogic principles. He must develop self discipline and self control to keep him away from various desires of worldly achievement. His mind should be free from such desires so that it can concentrate on getting more and more knowledge regarding yoga and philosophy of life.

Asteya

The fourth *yama* is *Asteya*. *Steya* means the act of stealing and *asteya* means non-stealing. To steal means to take away something without the right or permission. Stealing can be of different types. One can steal valuables, one can steal knowledge, (For example, copying somebody's writings), one can steal ideas, and one can steal relatives or friends. Stealing is harmful behavior since it creates negative

waves in the mind that disturbs the mental peace of mind and thus suppresses creativity. For example, some people are always engaged in creating new artwork. Their minds are all the time busy, finding new ideas and visions. At the same time there are some people who are anxious and desirous to get credit and prestige of creating new. But their minds are not creative; with the result they try to steal the ideas from others. Habit of stealing, will not allow their mind to develop its own creative capacity.

Aparigraha

Aparigraha is the fifth *yama*. It means not to accept anything from others. *Parigraha* means to get or to accept something from others. The habit and in fact the very intention of getting something from others creates the feeling of dependence and this in turn results in loss of self confidence. The person thinks of getting something from others, because he is not capable of making it for himself and hence he has to depend on others. Such habits will suppress mental progress. The mind with the habit of getting something from others will not make any effort in life to fulfill his own desires and he ultimately becomes dependent on others. Such a person cannot achieve his desired goals in life. So it is advised in *Rajyoga* to adopt the habit of *aparigraha*.

10] Niyamas

There are five *Niyamas* mentioned by *Patanjali*. These are the rules, to be followed in life. These five rules are

- (i) *Shaucha* - Purity
- (ii) *Santosha* – contentment
- (iii) *Tapa* - Ceaseless efforts
- (iv) *Swadhaya*
- (v) *Ishwar pranidhanam*

Saucha (Purity)

Purity should be at all levels. We are not referring to purity in the form of physical purity only. But purity should be both at physical level as well at mental level.

Physical purity: The physical purity has to be maintained both at an external level as well at an internal level. It is essential to maintain the cleanliness of the physical body. External body purity means keeping body clean. One should keep the body clean by taking regular bath. Regular bath with cold water is very hygienic. It helps in preventing a number of skin diseases. Some people advocate cold water bath. Cold water bath is good, because it lowers down the body temperature. But for those who can not tolerate cold water bath, can have a warm water bath. An early morning bath is very refreshing for both the body and the mind. As per the Hindu philosophy, no religious actions or

rituals can be performed without taking a proper bath.

The internal purity of the body implies keeping the body disease free and maintaining a good health. A diseased and an unhealthy body is not an appropriate tool for learning the yogic practices. For example, a person having a severe pain in the abdomen can not comfortably sit for meditation for a long time. His attention shall always be diverted towards the pain.

So for the purpose of long and persistent yogic practices one should have a completely healthy body. Also it is essential to understand that the mind and the body are inter-connected. There can not be healthy body in an unhealthy mind and vice-versa. In the chapter of meditation we shall learn the technique of keeping a healthy mind. The body can be kept healthy internally by the combination of the right diet, right exercise and the right type of rest.

Right diet: A right diet is very essential for maintaining good physical health. A right diet means a balanced diet in the medical terms. A balanced diet must contain, appropriate calories with the right proportion of protein, fat and carbohydrates in the diet. A normal person requires approximately, 2200 to 2400 calories for his daily work. So his total diet for 24 hours must contain 22-24 hundred calories. If the diet is lacking in calories, the person will start losing weight and he will be malnourished. In the same way if the diet is having more calories than required, then he will start putting on weight and will become obese.

Malnourishment and obesity, both are harmful for the body. Not only that, but the diet should contain the right proportion of protein, carbohydrate and fat. Protein is required for the growth of the body as well for the process of repair of tissues. Carbohydrate supplies ready made energy and fat is meant for storage of energy for the body. The best advocated proportion for protein, fat and carbohydrate is 15%, 15% and 70% respectively. Hence 15% of the diet calories should come from protein, 15% calories from fat and 70 % of the calories should be from carbohydrates. . If diet contains 2200 calories then it must have 300-350 calories from protein and the same from fat and remaining calories should be from carbohydrates. So the daily diet must have around 70-75 grams of protein, 30-35 grams of fat and approximately 300 grams of carbohydrate. Protein is available from milk and milk products, eggs, mutton, fish, pulses, etc; and fat is available from oil, ghee, cheese, butter, etc; and carbohydrate may be obtained from wheat, rice, etc. In addition to protein, fats and carbohydrates a person must take adequate amount of vitamins in his diet. Most of the vitamins are present in vegetables and leafy vegetables. So a person must take adequate amount of vegetables in his daily diet.

Right exercise: A regular exercise is as important as a balanced diet for maintenance of good health. Most of the people are not aware of this fact. People have a misconception that exercise is meant for those who deserve to become athletes or who desire to develop their muscles. But this is not

true. It is proved by number of medical researches that exercise is as essential as diet. Regular exercise increases physical vitality and endurance of vital organs. It can prevent number of diseases like heart attacks, cardio-vascular diseases, indigestion, diabetes and high B.P. A good exercise raises the general resistance of the body, enhances muscular power and increases respiratory capacity. It helps in developing good body resistance, which is helpful for preventing number of diseases. It also helps for increasing mental capacity. It helps in mental disorders like depression. A number of people believe that they can exercise for few months and then stop exercising. But in my opinion exercise is to be performed for a life time. In early days, the people were getting enough exercises during their routine work. So they were not in the need of extra exercise. But now there are numbers of gadgets available in the markets which are helpful for doing routine house work. As the modern man has more luxuries and comforts in life the body has no chance to get enough exercise daily. So the person has to spare some time from his regular routine life to do some exercise. Daily 40-50 minutes exercise is enough for keeping the body fit and healthy. In yoga, it is advocated that each person must perform certain yogic *Asanas* daily so that they can keep fit.

Purity of Mind: Purity of mind is equally or more important than purity of body. Human mind is full of mental activities. Thought process is the continuous process in the mind. Our mind has many aspirations, ambitions and expectations which

create persistent mental turmoil. There are numerous emotions and feelings in the mind some of which are positive and some of which are negative. Love, honesty, non-violence, integrity, and humanity are positive characters, which enhance mental capacities. But hatred, anger, jealousy, fear, greediness, and anxiety are negative characters that deplete mental energy. The human mind is full of impressions from the past experiences. These impressions are called as '*Sanskaras*' in the Hindu philosophy. It is believed that these *sanskaras* are collected in the mind right from birth. Not only has that but the person carried his *sanskaras* with him to next birth. So collection of *Sanskaras* is not of a single birth but it is the collection from a number of births which are stored into what is called as '*Karmashaya*' in the yogic language. The *sanskaras* stored in the *karmashaya* of a person governs the thought process which ultimately governs the attitude and behavior of the person. Hence the persons with evil and iniquitous *sanskaras* are likely to lead a sinful life and persons with good and religious *sanskaras* are likely to lead a pious life. As per medical theory, all the human actions are due to pre-conditioning of the mind. If pre-conditioning is not in the right direction, human action and behavior will be negative in nature and if it is in right direction, the action and behavior will be positive in nature. In order to clear the mind from faulty preconditioning one has to first de-condition the mind and then again re-condition the mind with positive virtues. The de-conditioning or removal of

sanskar in yogic term is called *Shuddhi*. This is known as *chit-shuddhi*. Hence one has to understand that positive *sanskaras* can only be set in when old negative *sanskaras* are removed from the *Karmashaya*.

This can be done through constant introspection and analysis of self. It is the nature of human mind to drop negative and wrong thought or feeling as soon as mind gets convinced regarding its negativity and wrongness. Hence mental awareness toward negative *sanskaras*, is required. This kind of mental awareness can be achieved only through active meditation.

Santosh

Second rule advocated by *Patanjali* is contentment; Contentment means to be happy with the available means. Discontentment is the root of all desires. Desires lead to expectations. And these unmet expectations create a feeling of unhappiness. And the feeling of unhappiness creates mental turmoil. If mind is always preoccupied with the thoughts of unmet expectations and desires then the mind is not at peace with itself. Such a state of mind is not desirable for achieving higher goals in life and for the practice of yoga.

Tapa

The third rule for *Raj yoga* is '*Tapa*', *Tapa* means continuous, persistent and regular efforts for

achieving the desired goals. “*Siddhi*” means ‘the highest successes. It is said that no *siddhi* even for material success can be achieved without *tapa*. One must put in regular efforts for a long period of time, if one desires to achieve any desired goals in life either material or spiritual. This is true in any walk of life. Hence even for material success, *tapa* is required. One can not become rich without continuous and persistent efforts. To site another example, if a person desires to learn classical music, he has to perform ‘*riyaz*’ or practice it on a regular basis for many years. This practice for learning good music is *Tapa* and without *tapa* one can not become a good musician. In the same way for yogic achievement, one has to practice it regularly for a long time. Then only one can experience the true benefits of regular yoga practice in one’s life.

Swadhyaya

The fourth principle of *Rajyoga* is ‘*Swadhyaya*’. *Swadhyaya* is the process of studying and acquiring in depth knowledge of the subject. Hence for the student of philosophy *Swadhyaya* denotes the study of the Vedas and the spiritual books. The detailed study of the subject is very essential for the achievement of goals. This is true for the study of any subject. It is not possible to achieve any goal without the detailed in depth knowledge of the concerned subject. Hence for example if a person desires to get success in his business then he must have deep and through knowledge of the type of

business he wants to carry out, that is, he must have a thorough knowledge of the product that he wishes to sell, about the market demand and the market competition.

In the same way when the person is desirous to achieve spiritual goals like achieving the state of *Samadhi* in his yogic pursuits, he must have a thorough knowledge of the path for achieving the same. Hence *Tapa* will be fruitless without *Swadhyaya*. So *Patanjali* has advocated and recommended *Swadhyaya* in his path to *Raj Yoga*. The knowledge of any subject can be achieved, through reading related and authentic books on the subject, holding discussions on the subject with his fellow students, and by getting guidance and knowledge from his teacher.

Ishwar Pranidhanam

The fifth and the most important rule described by *Patanjali* is *Ishwar pranidhanam* which means 'worship of God'. No work and no goal can be achieved without the blessings of God. So it is very essential that the *sadhaka* must have absolute respect and trust in God.

Prayer has very strong effect on the human mind. Prayer increases self confidence. One must feel that God is always there, to help one in the time of difficulty. As such as per Hindu philosophy *Ishwar* resides everywhere and in each individual's heart. So trust in God also means trust in self. No work can be successful unless one has absolute

confidence. Confidence can be achieved only, by having absolute trust in self.

The third effect of *Ishwar pranidhanam* is dissolution of self ego. When a person surrenders completely to the almighty, his self ego is dissolved. The practice of yoga requires complete egoless state of mind and the same can be achieved by *Ishwar pranidhanam*.

11] Asana

The third component of *Rajyoga* is *Asana*. The literal meaning of 'Asana', means 'sitting posture'. There are two main schools of thoughts as far as Yoga is concerned, out of which one is *Hatha yoga* and the second is *Raj yoga*. *Hatha yoga* puts greater emphasis for increasing the flexibility of the physical body. So it has prescribed a number of *Asanas*. The 'Asanas' in yogic meaning, is a special posture to be achieved by the *sadhaka*. The *Sadhaka's* body should be so flexible and elastic in nature that he can achieve all these difficult postures.

There are altogether eighty four different types of *asanas*. Different *asanas* are supposed to benefit different systems of the body. In the medical sense, *Asanas* means a special type of physical exercises. These are iso-metric type of exercises which increase the tone of muscles and enhance the movements of various joints. Some of the *Asanas* are simple which can be done by all persons, while some of them are quite difficult. It is advisable for

elderly and sick people to get medical advice before attempting such difficult postures. Majority of the benefits of *Asanas*, claimed by different authors and yogic teachers, are medically not confirmed. It requires thorough scientific research work, to prove the physical benefits of these *Asanas*.

In *Rajyogaa* more emphasis is given for mental and spiritual development and spiritual achievement. For *rajyoga*, *asana* implies only sitting posture. One has to practice this posture, so that one can sit for longer period in the same posture without any physical discomfort and pain, as for the practice of *pranayama* and meditation, one has to sit in one posture for a long time. Not only that but he has to sit in such a way that he remains motionless and at the same time physically comfortable. One should not feel pain or other unbearable reaction of body because it will distract his mind during the process of meditation. If one can sit in the same position for a longer time, without getting pain and discomfort, it is called '*Asan siddhi*'.

The posture advocated by *Raj yoga* is sitting posture with folded legs. There are three postures that are mentioned which are *Sukhasana*, *Siddhasana*, and *padmasana*. One should keep ones back straight while sitting. This posture will help him for better and smooth breathing, and better concentration of mind. When the back is kept straight, that is, in one straight line, the whole body weight will be in steady balance, because the line of gravity passes through broader base of the body. So

it is easier to maintain that posture for a longer period without straining the body muscles.

PRANAYAM

1] INTRODUCTION

Pranayam is the Yogic process by which one gets voluntary control over body and mind. It is the yogic process developed for the purpose of getting control over vital force. This control ultimately leads to more power to our body and mind. Basically *Pranayam* is a Sanskrit word. It is the combination of two words. These words are *Pran* and *Ayam*. The word *Pran* stands for 'vital force' and *Ayam* stands for 'control' and 'expansion'.

Acharya Patanjali is considered as an expert in Yoga. He has written a great book on Yoga in 400 B.C. The yogic method preached by him is known as *Ashtang Yoga*. The meaning of *Ashtang* is 'eight components'. He advocated eight steps for Yoga. These eight steps are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi. Pranayam is the fourth step of Patanjali's *Ashtang Yoga*.

MEANING OF PRANA

Before going in detail regarding *Pranayam*, one should understand the meaning and importance of *Pran* in the body. As per the *Ayurvedic* philosophy, *Prana* means air or gas. As per this concept, this *prana* flows all over the body. Not only is that but its action is different in different parts of

the body. In lungs it helps in respiration, in stomach it helps in digestion, in blood it helps in carrying energy to the distal parts of the body.

2] PRAN AS VITAL FORCE

In yogic terminology *Pran* is not simply air but it is vital force. Vital force is responsible for maintaining life and hence it is also known as live-force. All creatures like men, animals, birds, fishes, insects, are alive because of this live-force. It is believed that at the time of death live-force moves out of the body. As such life can not exist in the absence of live-force. Vital force is responsible for maintaining life on earth. Main characters of the life are to survive, to grow, and to reproduce. Machines, which are having no life, may perform highly complicated functions but it can not survive, grow, or reproduce

LIFE AND VITAL FORCE

The main characters of the live objects are growth, survival, and reproduction. All these functions are due to the effect of the live-force. A dead body which has no live-force, can not grow, survive, or reproduce. Under the effect of live-force, all the body organs function regularly and systematically. Not only that but the maintenance of perfect coordination between different organs of the body, is also due to the live-force. Human body is a very complex and a complicated machine having various organs like heart, lungs, stomach, kidney, liver,

brain etc. All the organs of the body, are supposed to perform specific functions for specific purpose. For example heart pumps the blood to different parts of the body for the purpose of providing nutrition and oxygen, lungs purify the blood, stomach and intestines help in the process of digestion and absorption of the food, and kidneys are responsible for removing unwanted elements from the blood. Brain is responsible for receiving information and sending instructions to various parts of the body. All these body organs operate with the ultimate goal of survival and reproduction. All these organs have to function in coordination with each other. This coordination is maintained by the live-force of the body. This live-force is commonly known as the vital force.

ACTIONS OF VITAL FORCE ON THE MIND

Human mind is the supreme commander and manager in the body. Physical body follows and carries out all the orders of the mind. Physical body can not act independently without the guidance of the mind. Human mind is the decision maker in all walks of life. Mind receives the information through various sense organs. After receiving the information, mind analyses them. After analysis, mind decides the mode of action, and finally it sends appropriate commands to the physical body for action. Human mind is having various faculties like memory, intelligence, will-power, receptivity, and creativity. All these faculties are basically the

parameters for measuring the mental capacity of a person. These mental faculties are dependent upon the degree of vital force of the mind. More specifically all these faculties are directly in proportion with the degree of vital force of the mind. As such these faculties are the parameters by which mental capacity can be accessed. Persons with higher and stronger vital force will be having better mental capacity compared to the person having weaker vital force. A dead person can not have memory, intelligence, receptivity, or creativity, because it does not contain vital force.

VITAL FORCE AND BODY RESISTANCE

Human body is vulnerable to numbers of diseases. The whole atmosphere around us is full of different kinds of deadly bacteria and viruses. These organisms are highly equipped to attack human body. Being pathogenic these organisms are capable of producing diseases. But all of them can not produce diseases because of the inbuilt immune mechanism of the body. Human body is having a natural resistance power which does not allow these organisms to produce any disease in the body. When the degree of resistance deteriorates due to some reason, the bacteria can attack the body and can produce disease. The power of this natural resistance is proportionate to the amount of vital force in the body. In the dead body there is no vital force, with the effect the dead body is devoid of natural resistance. A dead body can not fight against

the attack of various bacteria. So decomposition process starts in the body immediately after death. The basic philosophy of the Homeopathic System of medicine is based on this theory of vital force. In short our life is sustained due to the existence of vital force.

LEVEL OF VITAL FORCE

The level of vital force is not same in each person. Not only that but it varies in the same person from time to time. It is the common observation that some people are full of energy and vitality. Such persons are very active. Such persons are creative and ambitious. These persons are full of vital force. On the other hand the persons who are having weak vital force are lazy by nature. They are not creative. They prefer to rest and relax rather than to work. Most of the time, persons having strong vital force, are successful in life. In the same way the level of vital force varies in the same person at different periods of time. Children are very active. They can not remain without any activity for even a moment. If there is no activity they would like to play. This is because the level of vital force in the children is very high. As the age advances, the level of vital force deteriorates. At the time of old age the vital force is at the minimum level. Most of the old people are inactive by nature. They prefer to rest rather than to work. They would not like to start any new venture at this age. In short they just survive and pass their time.

Most of the old age diseases are degenerative in nature. Vital organs do not function at their full potential in old age. All these changes are due to reduced level of vital force in old age.

3] VITAL FORCE AS ENERGY

Vital force is one type of energy. It can be called as vital energy. On earth there are number of energies like electrical energy, mechanical energy, heat energy, atomic energy. As such whatever exists on earth, are either in the form of matter or in the form of energy. Physicists have recognized number of energies and discovered rules governing those energies. But science has remained silent as far as vital energy is concern. This is the energy which is responsible for life on earth. The basic characters of life are growth, survival, and reproduction. These characters are seen in all the lives on earth. A very complicated and complex instrument like the computer can perform multiple tasks which any normal human being can not perform. But yet the computer can not have those characters of life i.e. growth, survival and reproduction. No computer can grow by itself or can reproduce baby computers. On the other hand the smallest organism like the amoeba can grow, survive and can reproduce a baby amoeba. All species of earth have existed for millions of years because of this ability to reproduce. As far as life is concerned the smallest creature like

amoeba is far more superior to any highly complicated machine produced by the man.

Again it is observed, that the organisms having low vital force, are having limited functions and activities. While the organisms having more vital force are having better abilities, and so they can perform multiple functions. Unicellular organisms like amoeba have very limited functions of growth, survival, and reproduction. While organisms like insects can perform more functions as compared to amoeba. This is because they possess stronger vital force as compared to amoeba. Man is gifted with the highest amount of vital force and hence he can perform multiple tasks as compared to other animals. The superiority of man over other animals is due to the higher level of vital force that he possessed

4] PATHWAYS OF VITAL FORCE

Being the energy it cannot be seen by the naked eye, and nor can it be measured by any instrument. Only its manifestations are felt. As per the yogic philosophy the vital force is stored in the body at specific reservoirs. These reservoirs are called as *chakras* in yogic terms. The first and main *Chakra* is called *Muladhar*. It is situated at the lower end of the vertebral column. The last *charka* of the vital force is situated in the brain; the name of this *chakra* is *Sahastrar*. These two *chakras* are joined by central

path which is known as *Sushumna*. There are two more paths running parallel to *Sushumna*, the path running on the left side of *Sushumna* is known as *Pingala*, and the path on the right of *Sushumna* is known as *Ida*. These are the main central paths of vital force. There are six more *chakras* of vital force. These *chakras* are situated in the various parts of the body. They are like relay stations of energy. Apart from these main pathways, there are number of smaller pathways which carry vital force to the different and distal parts of the body. It is assumed that there are more than 40,000 such pathways in the body. In yogic terms, these pathways are known as yogic *Nadis*. It is presumed that vital force flows through these pathways to different parts of the body and to various organs.

EFFECTS OF BLOCKED PATHWAYS

In normal circumstances, the vital force supplied to each and every organ and body part, is adequate. With the result all the organs of the body can function normally. But it may happen that some of the pathways may get blocked. With the result some organs may not get adequate amount of vital energy. Lack of vital energy will result into mal-functioning of the organ. Such organs may function with reduced efficiency or may start mal-functioning. This situation may create disturbance in the over all coordination among various organs resulting into disease. As per the yogic belief the prime cause of the disease is disturbance in the normal flow of vital

energy. With the advancement of the age more and more pathways of the vital force are blocked. With the result more and more organs of the body, starts losing its efficiency. So in the old age, people are weak and more vulnerable to various diseases.

5] PRANAYAM AND VITAL ENERGY

Pranayam is the process of cleaning and reopening these vital energy pathways. In the yogic terms, such cleaning is called as *Nadi Shudhi*. *Nadi* means 'energy pathways' and *shudhi* means the 'process of cleaning'. The main function of *Pranayam* is *Nadi-Shudhi*. *Nadi-Shudhi* will lead to adequate supply of vital energy to all the parts and organs of the body. With the result all the parts and organs will function with better efficiency. Not only that, but there will be better coordination between the various organs. Such situation will create a healthier body and an efficient mind.

EFFECT OF PRANAYAM ON MIND

Human body is the combination of body and mind. The physical body can not function without the mind and the mind can not function without the body. In each action it is the mind which takes the decision. Body performs all the actions as per the decision of the mind. For the better performance one should have a strong body and a strong mind. Not only that, but there should be a proper coordination

between the two. Yogic *nadis* connect mind with the body. As such they work as the bridge between the mind and the body. All the commands of the mind are conveyed to the physical body through these energy pathways. If these pathways are blocked or damaged, the coordination between the body and the mind will be disturbed. In such circumstances, all the commands of the mind may not reach to the body, or being not pure and clear, those orders may be misunderstood or misinterpreted by the body. Once the equilibrium between the mind and the body is disturbed, the body will not be in position to cope with the demand of the mind. In such a situation the person may feel that all his ideas and thoughts can't be put in practice because his body can not fulfill the demand of the mind. For better efficiency and capabilities one should have a healthy mind, a healthy body, and an efficient coordination between the two. This can be achieved by the regular practice of *Pranayam*.

6] PHILOSOPHY OF PRANAYAM

Human body performs two types of actions. One is voluntary and second is involuntary. Voluntary means those actions which can be done voluntarily. For example, raising the hand, walking, and running, speaking, etc. are voluntary actions. These actions are voluntary, one may do it, or one may not do it. It all depends upon the person's own volition whether to perform the act or not to perform the act. But some of the actions are involuntary. These

actions are regular beating of the heart, the process of respiration, the process of digestion, liver functions, etc. These are involuntary actions because it is not under voluntary control of the person. One can not stop his heart beating, or digestive process, as per his wish. These actions are controlled by autonomic nerves system. These actions are adjusted as per the need of the body. But there are certain activities which are most of the time involuntary but it can be made voluntary if desired by the person. Respiration is such activity. It is involuntary in normal process but can be made voluntary if desired. The cycle of respiration goes on functioning without the knowledge of the person. But if the person likes to change its speed, he can do it, he can slow it down or he can make it fast, or he can stop it for short period. Internal body mechanism is all the time controlled by the mind. Functions are adjusted as per the body's need. These functions of the mind are automatic. But other activity like thinking process is voluntary. One may choose to think or not to think. In the same way one can choose to think about any specific subject. Emotions are partly voluntary and partly involuntary. At times one can control his emotions, at other times one can not control his emotions. It is also observed that mental activities are related with respiration. When a person is angry or excited, his respiratory movements are fast. But when his mind is quiet and tranquil, the respiratory movements are slow. It is not possible to be angry or excited without raising respiratory rates. So it is presumed that if

one can control his respiratory movements, then he can control his involuntary component of the mind. One can keep one's mind cool and calm by controlling his respiration. The same principal is applied in the process of *Pranayam*. In *Pranayam* one tries to control his respiratory movements. By which he tries to control his mental activities. Final aim is to attain a calm and quiet mind. With the practice of *Pranayam*, a person gets control over his respiratory movements. Respiratory movements are made slower and uniform. Once he gets control over his respiratory movements, automatically he gets control over his mental activities. He acquires ability to keep his mind calm and quite even during the time of stress.

PRANAYAM AND MEDITATION

Calm and quiet mind is the pre-requisite for the process of meditation. So if *Pranayam* is performed before meditation, it is easier to concentrate and to thereby attain a deeper level during meditation. Meditation is the process of attaining tranquility and quietude of the mind. Human mind is all the time busy with various activities. At a time our mind thinks of multiple subjects. It may be busy in either thinking of the past events or planning for the future. The mind can not concentrate on one subject for a longer time. At one moment it may think about money, at a second moment it may think about fashionable dress, and at the third moment it may think about his girl friend and next it may think

about business contacts. With the result the human mind is wasting most of its energy for trifle matters. If the energy is concentrated on one subject, it can achieve better results. Not only that but such mind will not allow the person to get into deeper meditation. Concentration is the prerequisite for the process of meditation. Mental concentration can be achieved only by the practice of *Pranayam*.

PRANAYAM AND SELF REALISATION

Self realization is the ultimate goal of all the yogic practices. As per the Vedic philosophy our body is having three main components:

- 1) Physical body
- 2) Mind
- 3) Soul or atman

The physical body is gross in nature. It can be seen and felt. The body which is made up of bones, muscles, organs, and skin is called the physical body. Mind is subtle. It can not be seen but its presence can be felt. It governs all the parts of the body. The soul or atman is subtler than mind. It can not be seen and it is also difficult to feel its presence by ordinary means. It can be called as the nucleus of the live-force. It is believed to be immortal, unborn, and stable. As per the Vedic philosophy, being immortal, it can not be destroyed by any means. At the time of death *atman* leaves the physical body and enters into a new physical body. This is known as re-birth. *Atman* is considered as full of joy and ecstasy. Once a person realizes its

joyful nature and immortal character and once the mind merges itself with the Atman; mind grasps all the characters of the Atman. Then there is no pain or unhappiness in life. The person then enjoys infinite happiness in life. This is the ultimate goal of each follower of the spiritual path. As per the opinion of *Patanjali*, it is not easy for an ordinary person to realize the self i.e. Atman. This is because of his ignorance. Only *Gnan*, absolute knowledge, can uncover the mystery of *Atmic* characters. As absolute knowledge is hidden behind the curtain of ignorance, it is not possible for the ordinary people to realize the self. This ignorance is known as *Avidya*. Atman can not shine with its full light because of *Avidya*. As per the opinion of *Patanjali*, regular practice of *Pranayam* can uncover the basic nature of Atman. This may lead to eternal joy and happiness. In short the effect of *Pranayam* is multiple. It effects on all three components of the human body, i.e. the physical body, the mind, and the Atman.

7] Effects of Pranayam

- 1) It keeps the body fit and healthy.
- 2) It enhances the general resistance power of the body. With the effect it helps in preventing various diseases.
- 3) *Kapalbhati Pranayam* is responsible for *Nadi-Shudhi*, and *Kumbhak Pranayam* is responsible for *Chit-Shudhi*.

4) *Chit-Shudhi* helps in de-conditioning of the mind. De-conditioning helps to change an individual's perception for life. He becomes more rational

5) *Pranayam* enhances vital force, which in turn enhances mental capacity.

6) Increased mental capacity helps in building up of self-confidence. Persons having self-confidence can achieve better success in life.

7) It strengthens the ability of concentration. Concentration helps in analyzing and solving the problems.

8) It strengthens all the basic characters of the mind. Basic characters of the mind are memory, intelligence, receptivity, and creativity.

9) It strengthens the will power of the person.

10) It helps in creating tranquility and calmness of the mind.

8] DIFFERENT METHODS OF PRANAYAM

There are more than ten types of *Pranayam*. But most commonly used and the most effective are three. These are *Kapalbhati*, *Bhramari*, and *Kumbhak pranayams*. All the *Pranayams* are

basically related with the control of the respiratory movements.

RESPIRATORY CYCLE AND PRANAYAM

It is advisable to know normal respiratory movements before starting the practice of *Pranayam*. Normal respiration can be divided into three main components:

A) Inhalation i.e. incoming of the air.

B) Momentary stoppage of air.

C) Exhalation i.e. outgoing of the air.

In yogic terms the first component is called *Purak*, the second component is called *Kumbhak*, and the third component is called *Rechak*. If the movement of air is observed very closely, it will be seen that as such there are four components:

1) Air going inside (*Purak*)

2) Air stopping for the moment (*Kumbhak*)

3) Air coming out (*Rechak*)

4) Again air movement is stopped for the moment i.e. *Kumbhak* and again air going inside.

So the respiratory cycle is like *Purak-Kumbhak-Rechak-Kumbhak-Purak*. So the component of *Kumbhak* occurs two times in one normal respiratory cycle. As such it is difficult to perceive *Kumbhak* in a normal cycle. In normal circumstances the person breathes 15-16 times per minute. So it takes 4 seconds to complete one respiratory cycle. Normally respiratory movements are not very deep. At the time of sleep the respiration is slower. While at the time of physical labor or

mental excitement it becomes faster. Respiration has direct relationship with the thinking process. When person is calm and quiet his respiration is slow and when he is mentally agitated, his respiration is faster. Hence if a person acquires the control over his respiration (so that it can be kept slow) then he can control his thought process. The ability to control thought process, helps the person to achieve control over his mind. Once the mind is controlled, the person can direct his thinking process as per his own desire. He can control his emotions. He can strengthen his will power. Such a person can achieve anything in the world, as he is the master of his mind.

With the practice of *Pranayam* one can control his respiratory movements. In *Pranayam* the length of all the components of respiration are increased. Ordinarily one respiratory cycle takes four to five seconds. In *Pranayam* one cycle may take 30 to 60 seconds. *Pranayam* means controlled, uniform, and measured process of respiration.

9] NORMAL RESPIRATION

One should understand the mechanism of normal respiration before starting the practice of *Pranayam*. Respiratory organs are nose, pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi, bronchioles, and alveoli of the lung. There are two lungs in the body. One is on the right side of the chest and the second on the left side of the chest. The lungs are like sponge. It expands when filled with air and contracts when there is no

air in the lung. Small alveoli are connected with small tubes, which are called bronchioles. These tubes are connected to form bigger tubes, which finally connects with the bronchus. The left and right bronchi are joined to form the trachea. The trachea opens into the larynx. Larynx opens into the pharynx. This finally opens into the nose. During the process of inhalation, the air passes through the nose and then to the pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi and finally through the bronchioles to the alveoli of the lungs. Here the fresh air comes in contact with blood. The oxygen part of the air is taken away by the blood. And the carbon dioxide part of the blood is taken away by the air. Air full of carbon dioxide comes out through the same route during exhalation. The body requires oxygen for various chemical processes. The glucose in the blood is chemically processed with the help of oxygen to produce energy. The energy is required for various functions of the body. As a result of these chemical processes the oxygen of the blood is utilized, and thus there is accumulation of carbon dioxide in the blood. This accumulated carbon dioxide is removed from the blood by the process of respiration. The process of inhalation and exhalation is done involuntarily without the conscious knowledge of the person. Lungs are covered on the outer surface by a thin layer of tissue. This is known as the pleura. The pleura are double layered. The inner layer is attached with the outer surface of the lung; and the outer surface of pleura is attached with the inner surface of inter-costal muscles. These are the small

muscles which connect various ribs with each other. These muscles are responsible for expanding or contracting the chest cavity. When these muscles are contracted, the angle of the ribs are changed, with the result the chest cavity is expanded. The outer layer of pleura is attached with chest cavity. So with the expansion of the chest, pleura are also expanded. This situation creates negative pressure between the two layers of the pleura. With the result the lungs get expanded. This situation creates negative pressure in the lungs. Now there is negative pressure inside the lungs, and positive pressure in the atmosphere. As there is unequal air pressure between atmosphere and the lungs, air from the higher pressure moves to the lower pressure. That means the outside air (higher pressure) will rush to the lungs (lower pressure area). This is the process of inhalation. This situation remains for few moments. Now inter-costal muscles start relaxing. With the result the chest cavity is contracted. Along with that pleura get contracted. This whole process creates positive air pressure in the chest cavity and finally in the lungs. Again there is unequal air pressure between the lung and outside atmosphere, with the result air from the lung, rushes out. This is exhalation. It is the common belief that when a person inhales deeply, his chest is expanded. As such, the truth is that the person expands his chest to inhale deeply. In fact inhalation is due to the process of expansion of the chest. There is one muscle called diaphragm. This muscle divides the chest cavity from the abdominal cavity. When

diaphragm is contracted, it helps to expand the cavity of the chest. So in the process of respiration, diaphragm also plays some part.

10] PRACTICE OF PRANAYAM

With the practice of Pranayam, the person has to get control over his chest muscles and the diaphragm so that he can control the speed of various components of respiration, i.e. *Purak*, *Kumbhak*, and *Rechak*. These three components can be lengthened to a certain extent but not beyond a certain point. This fact should be kept in mind while performing the practice of *Pranayam*. The person can slow down the process of inhalation and exhalation to a certain limit. One can hold the air for some time. But there is limitation to this voluntary ability. One can not hold the air (*Kumbhak*) for more than two minutes normally. Any attempt to hold the air beyond a certain point can cause serious damage to the vital organs. As such the success of *Pranayam* does not depend upon the ability of holding the air in the lung. *Pranayam* means a controlled practice of respiration. In *Pranayam*, one has to maintain a uniform speed (length) of *Purak*, *Kumbhak*, and *Rechak*. The proportion of all the three components should be uniformly maintained throughout the practice of *Pranayam*. *Pranayam* can be very beneficial to the physical and mental health, if it is systematically practiced. But the same process can be harmful to life, if it is not done scientifically. So it is always advisable to perform *Pranayam*, in the

presence of a person who is an expert in the art of *Pranayam*. Persons having lung or heart diseases should not try to practice *Pranayam* without medical advice.

Preparation (before starting *Pranayam*)

Selection of place

The place where *Pranayam* is to be practiced regularly should be neat and clean. The room should be spacious with comfortable temperature and enough ventilation. The room should not be congested with too much furniture. The place should be quiet and noiseless. Abnormal noises will not allow the mind to concentrate, and concentration is very essential for getting success in *Pranayam* and meditation.

Clothes

One should put on loose and clean clothes while practicing *Pranayam*. During the practice of *Pranayam*, the body and mind should be completely relaxed. It is not comfortable to do *Pranayam* with tight clothes. Specifically the clothes should not be tight around the chest and waist. Tight clothes around the waist and chest, will not allow free movements of chest and abdominal muscles, which are responsible for the respiratory movements. Dhoti or Pajama can be quite comfortable for the purpose.

Time

It is advisable to practice *Pranayam* in the early morning hours, because after a full night sleep, our body and mind is quite fresh. If it is not possible to practice *Pranayam* in the morning hours, then it can be practiced at evening hours. As per the Vedic scriptures, it should be practiced three times a day that is in the morning, noon, and evening.

Bath

It is advisable to take a good bath before practicing *Pranayam*. The body will be clean and fresh after a good bath. Cold water bath can lower down the body temperature.

Air passages

Both the nasal passages should be properly cleaned in the morning, because blocked- nostrils will cause obstruction, which will not allow easy passage of air during *Pranayam*. In yogic practice, students are advised to drink water through the nose in the morning, so that both the nostrils will be thoroughly cleansed. This practice should not be practiced without an expert guidance. It may cause allergic reaction with severe attack of common cold.

Meal

Pranayam should not be practiced after a heavy meal. After heavy meal most of the blood is diverted towards the digestive system. The digestive system is more active after a meal in comparison to other systems of the body. Secondly full stomach will not allow easy movements of the diaphragm which will hamper the process of *Pranayam*.

Posture

Kapalbhati or *Bhramari Pranayam* can be performed in the sitting or standing position. But *Kumbhak Pranayam* can be done only in the sitting position. Three types of *Asanas* (sitting postures) are advocated for the purpose of *Pranayam*. These are *Padmasan*, *Sidhasan*, and *Sukhasan*. Any of these three can be selected for the practice of *Pranayam*. The process of *Pranayam* and meditation lasts for 25 to 30 minutes. The person should remain comfortable during this period. So only that *Asan* should be selected which will not cause any discomfort during the practice of *Pranayam*. In *Kumbhak Pranayam* one should keep his back straight during the process. Straight back will facilitate easy passage of vital energy from one centre to other centre. If it is not possible to sit straight without support due to weakness or old age, one can take the support of wall or straight back rest. It is advisable to sit on the floor rather than to sit on a chair. It is advocated to keep thick cotton or

woolen cloth piece (*Asan*) on the floor. Cotton piece is preferred as it can absorb perspiration and it is bad conductor of heat and electricity.

One should not practice *Pranayam* during any episodes of sickness like fever, cough, diarrhea, asthma, or heart disease. The person having any chronic disease should take the advice of the doctor before starting *Pranayam* practice.

11] Kapalbhati Pranayam

This *Pranayam* can be practiced in any position. It can be practiced in either sleeping, or standing, or sitting position. If it is to be performed in standing position, then one should take the precaution of not keeping any hard furniture near the place of *Pranayam*. One should have loose clothes while performing the *Pranayam*. In sitting posture, *Sukhasan* is the most suitable for the purpose. Both the hands can be kept on the knee joint if it is a sitting posture, or it can be kept on the waist if it is a standing posture. Eyes should be kept closed. Start taking deep and quick breaths. Respiration should be fast and deep. In normal breathing the respiratory rate is 15 to 18 per/minute. But in *Kapalbhati Pranayam*, the rate can reach up to 60 to 100 per/minute. Breathing should be forceful. Most of the time breathing is abdominal; i.e. abdominal muscles are more active than chest muscles. There should be more emphasis on the *Rechak* component. Efforts should be made to have a forceful *Rechak*. Exhalation is the active process in this *Pranayam*.

The practitioner tries to bring out the air forcibly. With the forceful contraction of the abdominal muscles; one can create positive pressure in the chest. The positive pressure in the chest will push the air outside. As soon as the air is pushed outside, there will be negative pressure in the chest. This negative pressure will pull the air inside the lung. Again with the movement of the abdominal muscles one can push the air outside. So in the *Kapalbhati Pranayam*, *Rechak* is an active process, while *Purak* is a passive process. *Kapalbhati* can be done for 50 to 60 times in the beginning. Later on with practice, the number can be raised to 100 to 200 times. In the later stage one can perform *Kapalbhati Pranayam*, for 7 to 10 minutes. As soon as the process is completed, one should relax completely for 8 to 10 minutes. A person in the standing posture can lie down on the ground and relax. While a person in the sitting or supine position can remain in the same position and relax. One should keep the eyes closed while relaxing. This state of relaxation may lead to the state of meditation. It is easier to enter into the state of meditation after *Kapalbhati*. Speedy breathing helps to clear all the thoughts from the mind. Thus the mind shall attain the state of thoughtlessness for a short period of time.

In Yogic terms, *Kapalbhati* is meant for *Deh-shudhi*. It means internal cleansing of the body. There are five types of cleansing procedures in yoga. These are known as *Neti*, *Dhoti*, *Basti*, *Nehli*, and *Kapalbhati*.

12] Bhramari Pranayam

This type of *Pranayam* is named as *Bhramari pranayam*, because of the typical hum that is produced during the process of this *Pranayam*. *Bhramar* is the Sanskrit word for bee. When group of bees fly together, it produces special hum. Same type of sound is produced when *Bhramari Pranayam* is practiced. This *Pranayam* should be done in the sitting posture. *Sidhasan*, *Padmasan*, or *Sukhasan* can be convenient for this *Pranayam*. One should sit comfortably on the *asan* keeping the back straight. Eyes should be closed. In *Bhramari Pranayam* there are two main components. These are *Purak* and *Rechak*. One has to take a deep breath, and then allow the air to come out slowly. When air is coming out through the sound tract (vocal cords), it produces a special sound. *Purak* is deep and quick. While *Rechak* is slow.

Bhramari Pranayam can also be performed along with recital of *Omkar Mantra*. *Omkar* is the *Beej-mantra*. As per the Vedic philosophy, *omkar* is the symbol of God. *Omkar-Japa* (repetition of the same mantra for several times) is considered as highly beneficial for the *Sadhaka*. This *Omkar Japa* can be performed along with the *Bhramari Pranayam*. The word *Om* is made up of three alphabets. These are O, U, and M. When all the three are spoken together it produces specific sound. The *Omkar* can be pronounced as three different ways.

A] When O and M, both are equal in length. It can sound like O....M....

B] When O is longer than M. it can sound like O.....M.

C] When O is shorter and M is longer. It sounds like O... M.....

‘O’ is a vowel and ‘M’ is the consonant. But both can be prolonged as per the wish of the speaker. When ‘O’ is spoken in prolonged tone, mouth remains open; ‘M’ can be spoken with closed lips. Both the words are vocalized when air is allowed to pass through the vocal cords. Prolongation of the word depends upon the ability to push the air outside for a longer time period. A person who has the capacity to inhale more air, and at the same time, who can very slowly release the same air through the sound tract (vocal cord), can vocalize the word ‘Om’ for a longer period. As it is shown before, it can be done in three different ways. The last method, where ‘O’ is short, and ‘M’ is long can be suitable for *Bhramari Pranayam*. In the beginning air should be inhaled to the maximum capacity. Then *Om* should be vocalized, with short ‘O’ and long ‘M’. This can be prolonged as much as possible. At the end when no more air can be pushed outside through vocal cords, it will not be possible to vocalize M. At this point of time, air is inhaled either through nose or through the mouth, Again ‘Om’ should be repeated with a short ‘O’ and a long ‘M’. In this way the same process can be repeated for 12 to 15 times. One should keep the eyes closed during the whole process. Immediately after the *Pranayam* one can move into a meditative state.

13] *Kumbhak Pranayam*

Kumbhak Pranayam is more commonly practiced by various yogis. It is the standard *Pranayam*. It is already told that there are three main components of the normal respiratory cycle; i.e. *Purak*, *Rechak*, and *Kumbhak*. Normal respiratory cycle is completed within 4 to 5 seconds. When each component is modified by voluntary control it is called *Pranayam*. The basic philosophy is to slow down the normal respiratory process by voluntarily control, so that the time taken by *Purak* and *Rechak* will be more than normal, and at the same time the person will hold his breath for some time.

This *Pranayam* is practiced in the sitting posture. One should sit erect with back straight. One has to sit in this position for 15 to 20 minutes. So if the person has no capacity to sit for this much time without any discomfort, he can sit with a back support. Following are the steps for the *Kumbhak Pranayam*.

A] Sit quietly for 4 to 5 minutes with closed eyes. One can recite a prayer before starting the procedure. During this period his respiratory rate will come down to normal low level. Before starting the *pranayam* the person should attain state of complete physical and mental relaxation

B] With the help of right thumb, slowly close right nostril. Allow the air to come out slowly from left nostril. The process should be slow and uniform. Try

to bring out as much air as possible. The process may take 5 to 8 seconds. This is *Rechak*.

C] As soon as all the air comes out, draw the air inside with the same nostril. This is *Purak*. The process should be slow and uniform. It will take 5 to 7 seconds to draw the air inside.

D] When the lungs are full with the air, close the left nostril with the right ring finger. Hold the air for some time. This is *Kumbhak*.

E] Again open the right nostril by removing the thumb and allow the air to come out very slowly. This is *Rechak*.

F] When all the air comes out from the lung, start the process of taking the air inside with the same nostril.

G] A group of *Purak, Kumbhak and Rechak*, forms one *Pranayam*. This way one can perform four such cycles of *Pranayams* in the beginning.

H] With more and more practice, the person can get mastery over this process of *Pranayam*. Then he can increase the number of cycles and the duration of *Pranayam*.

14] Important points to be observed during Pranayam

A] The speed of *Purak and Rechak* should be very gradual, smooth, and uniform throughout the practice of *Pranayam*.

B] Normally *Rechak* should take more time than *Purak*. Ordinarily *Rechak* takes double the time than *Purak*. So if *Purak* is for five seconds then *Rechak* should be for ten seconds.

C] In the beginning the practitioner should practice only *Purak and Rechak*. One should inhale the air through left nostril and then gradually allow the air to come out from the right nostril. This process should be repeated for 6 to 8 times. In the beginning there is no need to consciously maintain the proportion between the *Rechak and Purak*

D] After some practice when one gets control over the rhythm of respiration, one may try to maintain the proportion. In the beginning the ratio between *purak and rachak* may be 1/1.5. Then after certain practice the ratio can be altered to 1/2.

E] After some more practice one can introduce *Kumbhak* in the process of *Pranayam*.

F] The advocated proportion between *Purak, Kumbhak and Rechak*, is 1:4:2. But this advocated

ratio is very difficult to achieve. One may try to have ratio of 1:1:2 in the beginning, then the ratio should be 1:2:2 then 1:3:2. The ratio of 1:4:2 may be reached after 2 to 3 years of continuous practice.

G] No undue stress should be taken to lengthen the time of *Purak*, *Rechak*, or *Kumbhak*. Some people are under the wrong impression that the *Pranayam* is the exercise for holding the breath. With the effect they try to hold the breath forcibly. Such practice may damage the respiratory system and other vital organs.

H] As far as possible the same proportion should be maintained throughout the process of *Pranayam*. For example, if the proportion is 1:2:2, for the first *Pranayam* then subsequently the same proportion should be maintained for all the remaining *Pranayams*.

I] In the beginning, it is advisable to start and practice *Pranayam* in the presence of an expert. After getting thorough knowledge of all the components, and after getting full confidence, one can practice it independently.

J] Mind should be absolutely calm and quiet during the practice of *Pranayam*.

15] Jalandhar bandh

it is also advocated by some experts that Jalandar Bandh should be performed along with Pranayam. Jalandar-Bandh is a special mudra (posture) of the neck. In Jalandar-Bandh, head is bent forward till the chin touches the upper bony notch (Jugular notch) of the sternum. Jalandar- Bandh is performed during Kumbhak.

Pranayam should be started with usual *Purak*. Air is taken with one nostril. Then the nostril is closed with the finger. Then head is bent forward till it touches the upper bony part of the sternum. This position is maintained till the completion of *Kumbhak*. Again the head is raised, brought to the normal position. Then *Rechak* should be started by opening the second nostril. *Jalandar-Bandh* should be learnt from an expert teacher only. It is not advisable for a beginner to practice *Jalandar- Bandh*.

The process of learning *Pranayam* is very gradual and slow. It is not advisable to hurry the process. It is not possible to master the art in a short period. Unnecessary haste can lead to disappointments and failures. Not only that but it can damage vital organs. The time period required for learning *Pranayam* may vary from person to person. Some people can learn it within a few days, whereas some people can take months to learn it.

Effect of *Pranayam* is very gradual. One may not perceive any effect in the beginning. Properly performed *Pranayam* is always effective. One should practice it regularly for long time without expecting speedy and spectacular results.

Caution :

Pranayam is helpful for bringing mental piece and serenity.

But if performed incorrectly it can cause physical or mental complications. So it is advisable to learn it properly under the guidance of expert in the art of Pranayam.

MEDITATION

1] Art and science of Meditation

Meditation is the process of training, taming and transforming the human mind for the purpose of expanding mental capacity and for achieving higher mental growth. Meditation is the process of developing the mind. It is the process of de-conditioning and re-conditioning of the mind.

Swami Shree Chinmayanandji in his book *“Meditation and Life”* says that ‘meditation is the art of training the mind. This secret alchemy of changing the baser men by the mysterious and spiritual touch of scriptural knowledge into the rich glow of divine charm and golden brilliance is the art of meditation’. He also adds further that it is the elaborate technique of training the mind to forget its haunting dreams, visions of the world and to remember its glorious native visions of human.

Training the mind

In fact meditation is the art and science of training the mind. Before understanding the process of meditation, it is imperative to understand the anatomy and physiology of the mind. Human body is the combination of several organs and systems. The central nervous system controls all the body functions. It consists of the brain and the spinal chord. In addition to the central organs there is a net work of nerves, which is called as the peripheral nervous system. There are five sensory organs. These are eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. These sensory organs are responsible for providing information of the outside world to the brain. For example eyes are responsible for visual information, ears are responsible for auditory information, skin is responsible for tactile information, nose gives the information regarding the smell and tongue is responsible for knowing various tastes.

The principal aim of life is survival. And the brain continuously protects the body from the harmful effect of the outside world, with the help of the information received by its various sensory organs. In addition, the brain also controls all the internal body systems. This is done with the help of hormones and special network of the nerves known as autonomic nervous system. This system is responsible for controlling, regulating and coordinating various systems of the body. Hormones and autonomic nervous system regulates

the internal body functions in such a way that it can fulfill all the demands of the body not only during normal period but also during stress and strain. As such it is the self regulating mechanism which regulates all the organs and the systems. Most of the brain functions are studied and analyzed in detail by the medical science. Medical researchers have also studied the same in various animals. Biologically, man is also an animal. But he is more advanced than other animals due to his highly evolved brain. Man is at the highest step, on the evolutionary ladder. He is a highly evolved animal. His brain is engaged in more complicated and complex activities as compared to the animal brain. In addition to survival and reproduction, it controls many faculties of life. Human brain's activities are not only limited to the purpose of survival and reproduction but it can think, can analyze the different life situations, can remember the past experience and can also plan for the future. Besides this, the human mind, can engage in the emotional avenues of love, hatred, pleasure, sorrow, revenge, fear, jealousy, greed, desire, and many other emotional outbursts. These functions of brain are not properly analyzed and understood in detail by the medical science. It is very difficult to pin-point the spots on the brain, where such emotions grow. In philosophical language, it is believed that mind is the seat of all such faculties of the brain.

2] Mind

Mind is more subtle than brain. Brain is the gross physical entity. It can be seen. Its parts can be identified anatomically, while mind can not be seen. It can be felt only. As such mind is superior to the brain. Brain can be compared with any high quality computer. As a computer can not run by itself, for running the computer, some one has to feed the data, to load the various programs, and to run the computer. In the same way, the brain can not function without the orders and command of the mind. A highly complicated and advanced computer can not run properly if the person who runs the computer is not having knowledge of various systems of the computer. Computer can be utilized as simple calculator in the hands of a child. The same computer can be utilized by the shop-keeper as a machine to prepare vouchers and maintain the accounts of the shop. The same computer can be used as a highly sophisticated machine, and can perform various high level tasks in the hands of a computer expert. In the same way each human being is given a similar brain. Anatomically each brain is having same parts and enough number of neurons and the same type of nervous network. But some persons can use it as simply to control the body organs to maintain life and to carry out the day to day functions of life. At the same time researchers, scientists, mathematicians, writers, poets, are having capacity to use the same brain for highly complicated tasks like performing research work, analyzing complicated mathematical and

scientific problems or creating the world's best literature. It is presumed that normal average person hardly utilizes 15-20% capacity of the brain. Even great scientists and researchers are also not in a position to utilize it to the fullest potential. This is because the mind behind the brain is not efficient enough to utilize the brain of its full potential. If the mind is strong and well developed, it can perform various hard and complicated tasks with the help of the brain.

What is mind?

As it is told mind is subtler than the brain. It is the driving power, which drives the brain as per its wish. In Hindu philosophy, mind is not considered as the brain. Mind is the human consciousness which is manifested in thought, memory, perception, feeling, will or imagination. The same mind is known and recognized with different names. When it is engaged in analyzing and solving problems it is known as '*Buddhi*' or intellect; when it functions as a source of desire it is known as '*Mana*'; when it is deeply involved with emotions it is known as '*chit*'; and when the same mind officiates in the concept of I-ness and my-ness, it is designated as '*Aham*' or ego. Mind, a subtle matter, is having multiple functions. It gives the feeling of I-ness to the person. When this feeling of I-ness is extended to other objects, either living or non-living, it is modified as my-ness. Mind is all the time busy expanding and enlarging the circle and area of my-ness which is perceived by the

person as personal development and growth which in turn sows the seeds of new desires and expectations from life. These desires may be to become physically strong, or it may be the desire to get more property and possession, or it may be the desire to have more power and prestige, or it may be the desire to get social recognition. There is no end to this list of desires. This feeling of my-ness also gives birth to the feeling of attachment.

Attachment is known as *Asakti* in Sanskrit language. Person can have *Asakti* for his own body, or *Asakti* for one's family and friends or property and possessions. The resultant outcomes of all these feelings are love, hatred, happiness, un-happiness, joy, sorrow, pleasure and displeasure. The person spends whole of his life to fulfill his desires, with the intention to get happiness, but as all the desires and expectations can not be fulfilled, so he never gets permanent feeling of joy and contentment. At the end, in the later period of his life, the person realizes that despite of all the material gain of power, prestige and property, he does not feel 'fulfilled' and happy in life. He feels incomplete and empty in life. This emptiness within, can not be fulfilled by any of the material successes of his life. He gets the feelings of failure and despair. From this point onwards he changes his path. He realizes that material success can not give him the permanent and lasting happiness. From this point onwards man starts his journey towards spirituality.

3] Concept of happiness and spirituality

The journey towards spirituality is the journey towards true happiness in life. The ultimate goal of human life is happiness. Most of the people perceive happiness in property, power, prestige, status and other luxuries of life. But those who have achieved enough wealth, prestige, status and power in life, are also not happy. It means that material gain and fulfillment of multiple desires are not the real means to get happiness.

Happiness is the state of mind, which generates feelings of contentment, joy and fullness in life. The human mind enjoys this feeling and desires repetition of the same. The concept of happiness is different with different persons. Not only that but it changes for the same person from time to time. A child is happy with small toys but with the advancement of age; he requires different types of toys for getting pleasure. Young boys are happy with different games like cricket, tennis etc. In the initial period of one's career one feels happiness on achieving different luxuries of life. After the age of forty, the person craves for prestige and social recognition. He also desires to have money and power. But all these materialistic gains do not satisfy and fulfill his deep rooted desire for happiness. At the end he realizes that none of these objects can give him permanent and lasting happiness. He also realizes that absence of misery is not happiness.

As such happiness can be defined as a positive state of mind, which leads to quietude, bliss and ecstasy. The feeling of ecstasy is a very rare phenomenon with the common person. The word ecstasy is generated from the Greek word 'ecstasies'. 'Ecstasies' mean 'existent to drive out of one's senses'. It is the sense of intense joy and delight. If the state of emotion is so intense that one is carried beyond thought and self control it is the trance or rupture of mystic or prophetic exaltation. As such it is the state of mind, when it enjoys mere existence. It is at the state of thoughtlessness and egolessness, one enjoys his happiness at its fullest potential.

This feeling can not be brought voluntarily in day to day life. It occurs by itself. It is the sudden spurt of some unknown highly pleasurable feeling at some moment in life. For example, when a person is sitting quietly in front of vast sea, he enjoys the vastness and beauty of the sea. He is totally engrossed in the quiet pleasure of nature. He forgets his worldly connections with family, property, money, prestige, power. At that moment he is not a big powerful officer, or rich man of the society. He is just himself. There is only he and the vastness of nature. Gradually, he becomes totally absorbed and his I-ness is also lost. He becomes one with nature. He feels that he and the vast sea in front of him are not two separate entities, but both the entities get merged at a subtler level in his mind. Suddenly he

feels a sudden spurt of some unknown, undefined, highly joyous condition, which is nothing but 'ecstasy'.

There are a number of incidences in life which can lead to such a state of mind. The musician engrossed in producing real beautiful music, becomes one with the music and at one point of time he loses his own identity. By becoming one with music, he himself becomes the music and he experiences the feeling of ecstasy. Any creation or any creative activity which is done with a selfless motive, and which is performed with the sole aim of creating beautiful creation, can give rise to such a feeling of happiness. A painter gets the same feeling when he finishes his painting after the hard labor of several days. A writer gets the same feeling, when he finishes his writing and produces a beautiful piece of literature. The same feeling can be achieved, when the person performs certain actions, which are helpful to others and when the action is performed without the expectation of any material reward. Hence this feeling can be achieved only while imparting selfless love towards others and that too sans expectations.

In all above example it is evident that one can get such feeling, provided he fulfills certain conditions. The first condition is 'selfless act'. Action should be without any selfish motive. One should not expect any reward from that action. The musician, who sings for performing stage shows and earning

money, will not get that feeling of ecstasy. The painter, painting the picture for the sole purpose of selling the picture in the market, will also not experience the original joy of creation. Helping others for gaining prestige or recognition from the society will again not give rise to this feeling of ecstasy. So the first condition for achieving happiness is 'selflessness'. One has to forget the self. One has to dissolve his ego.

Again this feeling can not be gained when the mind is full of turmoil and stress. Only a quiet and peaceful mind can get this feeling. It means that there should not be any thought in the mind. The mind should be in the state of thoughtlessness. As such mind is nothing but a bundle of various thoughts and feelings. If there is no thought or there is no feeling, the mind will not exist. It will die and extinguish. It will disintegrate. This is the state of mindlessness. When there is no mind, there can not be the feeling of I-ness or my-ness. The feeling of I-ness merges and dissolves with the prevailing vastness of nature, with the super power of universe or with Brahma as mentioned in the Hindu philosophy. When one gets dissolved in the domain of the super power, the 'I' is lost or merged with the superpower and one experiences the feeling of '*Aham Brahmasmi*'. So primary conditions for gaining such feeling are:

I] One should be selfless

Ii] There should be absolute concentration of mind

for fulfilling the task.

lii] Mind should be quiet and peaceful.

iv] The final state is thoughtlessness and egolessness with the dissolution of self.

V] Once the self is totally dissolved one experiences the feeling of ecstasy.

The state of egolessness, thoughtlessness and mindlessness can be achieved through the regular practice of meditation.

4] Meditation - an act of molding the mind.

It is the act of transforming the mind to the super-mind. Molding means giving a different shape as per the vision of the creator. When sculptor takes the stone, to create an art of work, he has a definite idea in his mind, regarding his idol. In the same way when one desires to transform the mind; one must have a definite idea, as to what type of mind he wants to create through the practice of his meditation. It has rightly said by some great thinker that 'You are the stone. You are the chisel. And you are the sculptor'.

Our mind being the decision maker, it should be strong and capable of taking the right decision on the right time. The mind creates its own image of 'I'.

So the mind should have the clarity as regards the real image of 'I'. Mind being the place of creativity, it should be highly creative. The feelings of happiness, unhappiness, pleasure, sorrow etc. are felt at the mental level. So one should mould the mind; in such a way, that it will remain calm, composed, undisturbed and unperturbed in all the circumstances of life. The main faculties of mind are memory, intelligence, receptivity and creativity. All these faculties should be strengthened, so that one can utilize the mental power at fullest potential.

In short, the mind should be redesigned in such a way that with the help of such a mind one can achieve higher objectives of life and living. These objectives may be either material success or spiritual happiness. The process of thus molding the mind is called as meditation.

5] Meditation - a process of deconditioning and reconditioning of the mind.

Conditioning of the mind is a continuous and a constant process. It starts from the birth and continues for the entire life. Conditioning is the behavioral response of the mind to the external stimuli depending upon past experiences and memory. The human mind is conditioned in various ways. A simple example of conditioning is the timing for the feeling of hunger. Each person gets feeling of

hunger at the specified time at which he usually takes his meal. Hence the office goers who are conditioned to eat at 10.00 a.m.; will get the sensation of hunger at 10.00 a.m. and those who are habituated to take a late lunch will feel hungry in late after noon. The affinity for particular colors; or for a particular type of music; or for a particular type of cuisine; are examples of the conditioning of the mind. All religious beliefs are nothing but examples of conditioning of the mind. And all superstitions are examples of the strong conditioning of the mind. For example, the people in the western countries consider number 13 as an unlucky number, while for the eastern people the number 13 is neither lucky nor unlucky. Thus the human mind is conditioned consciously or unconsciously for many subjects in life. This conditioning depends upon the past experience, family culture, society culture, religion and caste. Conditioning of the mind is the resultant outcome of our past experiences. The child who has been brought up in a Hindu family will consider it sinful to eat non-vegetarian food, while a child who has been brought up in a Muslim family will eat non-vegetarian without any tinge of guilt. Because of the conditioning of the mind, the person reacts in a definite pattern. He loses flexibility and rationality of the mind. Such a mind is corrupt by a number of wrong beliefs and superstitions.

Stephen Covey in his book named "The seven habits of highly effective people" has coined a new word

“Paradigm’ for ‘conditioning of mind’. The word ‘paradigm’ comes from the Greek language. It was originally a scientific term, and is most commonly used today to mean model, theory, perception, assumptions, or frame of reference. With more general terms it is the way we ‘see’ the world not in terms of our visual sense of light, but in the terms of perceiving, understanding and interpreting.

Human mind has the capacity to store the information and experiences as memory. From childhood it collects a lot of information and stores it in the compartment of memory. Information is not stored as mere factual events. But this is labeled as good or bad, joyful or sorrowful, painful or painless. In future when such incidences are repeated it is immediately perceived in the light of previous experience. The child, who has been beaten severely in the school by the teacher, believes that all the teachers in the world are cruel. For the person who has been cheated by a friend will not trust anybody in his life time.

A fixed paradigm or conditioning of the mind pollutes the thinking process. It is the belief of the yogic philosophy that ‘the past experiences stored in the mind’ decides behavior and pattern of thinking process. In the yogic terms, it is known as ‘*Karmashaya*’. It is believed that the mental-effect of all the karmas of life, are stored in “*Karamshaya*”, and because of the effect of this ‘*karamshaya*’, the person suffers inabilities to perceive rightly. Hence

wrong perception will lead to wrong assumption, which will lead to wrong conclusion and finally wrong decision.

So it is imperative to remove all the wrong ideas, wrong beliefs and irrational thoughts from the mind. An adulterated and a corrupt mind, is unable to reach to the final stage of quietude, bliss, and ecstasy. So the mind should be cleaned thoroughly. The cleaning process of the mind or is called '*chit-sudhi*'. This can be done through meditation.

6] Meditation - the journey inward

Meditation is the process of introspection for the purpose of self analysis. Human mind is all the time engaged in remembering past events or analyzing and reacting to present events or planning for the future. The person is all the time busy analyzing the different behavioral patterns of others. Most of the time, he is critical for the presumed negative characters of others. Every man assumes that he is the best person in world devoid of any flaws. Man never critically analyses himself. He always holds other people or some life situations to be accountable for his unhappiness. He never dwells into self inquiry and sees that he himself is responsible for all his feelings of happiness and unhappiness. Meditation thus gives one the access to self introspection.

Every person has positive and negative characters. Positive characters are like vitamins and such characters strengthen mental capacity. While negative characters erode and weaken the mind. No human being has only positive characters or only negative characters. The human mind is a conglomeration of positive and negative characters. However the degree of the positive and negative characters varies with different persons. For strengthening the mental capacity, one has to minimize the negative characters and maximize the positive characters. This can be done by the process of introspection and self analysis.

For the process of self analysis, one has to be critical and a neutral and impartial judge of himself. One has to analyze his own nature and behavioral pattern. One has to be especially aware of one's negative characters. It is the nature of human mind, that as soon as it becomes aware of the negativity of his characters, the same characters will be dropped automatically. The person who realizes that he is highly egoistic, shall become aware of his own ego, and automatically his ego will be dropped. The person has to systematically analyze himself to become aware of his negative characters so that they can be minimized. In the same way, the positive characters are also to be recognized and strengthened.

7] Meditation - the process for conditioning the mind to live in the present

Human mind is all the time busy. It can not remain idle for even a fraction of a second. Most of the time, it is either busy dwelling on the past event or planning for the future. The mind has a habit to dwell on the past events. If the past events are joyful then it enjoys those moments. But most of the time mind dwells on the past events which were unhappy or the events where he was defeated, or when his ego was hurt. The memories of such events generate the feelings of helplessness and hatred, which subsequently weakens the mind. If the mind is not busy with past, then it wanders in the imaginary future. It plans for the future. It builds up the castle of great desires and expectations. One dreams that this imaginary castle of desires and expectations shall be fulfilled in the future and shall give him limitless happiness. When he realizes, that such expectations can not be fulfilled, one experiences feelings of unhappiness and frustration in life. So in fact, dwelling on the past disagreeable events or dreaming about an illusory future depletes the mind of its inner power, energy and happiness.

Most of the time, the person is not mentally present in the present moments. For example, a person may be walking in the garden where there are beautiful trees, flowers and birds in the garden. However his

attention is not in the garden. He is not enjoying the beauty of nature but he is dwelling on his past or the future. A person may be eating his lunch. But Instead of enjoying his lunch, he pays attention to reading newspaper or watching the television. Hence his attention is diverted and he can neither enjoy his lunch, nor can he pay full attention to the news.

Most of the time feelings of unhappiness are mental in origin. It is created either by dwelling on unhappy past events, or by creating unmet future expectations. With the result, the mind misses the joy of being in the present moment. **If the mind learns to remain in present moment, the chances for self created unhappiness will be minimal.**

With the regular practice of meditation, one can learn how to keep the mind in the present moment and enjoy it fully.

8] Meditation - the path to super-human status

On the ladder of evolution, unicellular organisms are at the bottom and human being is on the top. The law of survival and reproduction applies to all living organisms. Nature has provided specific mechanism to each species for their survival and reproduction. Food and security are basic requirements for survival. Animals learn the technique of acquiring food and protecting the self, by instinct and by genetic inheritance. Most of the animals do not

possess the capacity to think. Hence they can not remember the past, or analyze the situation in the light of past experience and plan for the future. For example, every day, birds and animals, wander in search of food. As soon as they get food, they satisfy their hunger and then relax. It has never occurred to the animals that food should be stored, so that it can be used for the next day. Most of the animals sleep wherever they find it convenient, but it has never occurred to them to build special houses, which can protect them in all the seasons.

Man is gifted by a higher mental faculty. He can think, analyze, evaluate and plan for the future. Man has found out various techniques of farming and solved the problem of food. He has built protective houses, which can protect him against most of the dangers. Further man started staying in groups for the purpose of security. Modern societies are modified forms of group living of the primitive man. He formed number of rules and acts, for the purpose of personal behavior. Modern development is due to the higher mental faculty of man.

Shri Arbindo has visualized the possibilities of man having the potential to be a super-human being. A super human may have much higher mental capacity than a normal human. Man has five sensory organs. These are ear, nose, eye, taste and touch. Our sensory organs are having limited capacity. For example, eye can see limited band of frequencies of light. It can see violet to red color.

But it can not recognize ultra-violet or infra-red color. In the same way, our ear can listen to sound waves for a limited wave-length. But our ears can not hear ultra-sonic sound waves. There are animals on the earth that are having a better visual capacity or auditory capacity than human beings. Bat's ears are so sensitive that it can hear the echo of its own sound and through that can determine its path of flight and avoid hurdles when flying. The dogs are gifted with a strong nose, so that they can smell certain objects from a very far distance.

In spite of limited sensory abilities, man has developed a highly sophisticated system for communication. Animals and birds can communicate with each other but the capacity for communication is very limited. Man is the only species who has developed language for the purpose of communication. Man is capable of communicating his thoughts in various languages, through the medium of speech or writing.

It is also observed that human mind does not think in the terms of language. Mind thinks by creating various visual impressions. If it memorizes the past event, visual impressions are created on the mental screen, of that past event. If it plans for the future, then, in the same way visual impressions of future expected events are created on his mental screen. So in the process of speaking, the first stage is creation of visual impression on the mental screen. In the second stage, mind converts that impression in

language, and finally it is brought out either as speech or writing.

There are yogis who have the capacity to read the thoughts of others. Their mental capacities are so sharp and developed that they can clearly see the visual mental images on the mental screen of the other person. Yogis endowed with such a capacity can easily read the thoughts of other person. It may happen that yogi may not know the language of other person. In spite of that he can catch and understand his thoughts because, a yogi can see and catch the thoughts at the image stage. In the same way, a yogi can understand the feelings of animals. Such capacities of having higher capacity perceptive organs and the ability to understand the opposite person's thoughts and feelings, without the normal way of communication are the characters which can make super-human out of a common man. This can be achieved through regular and the constant practice of meditation.

9] Meditation makes the man a complete man

It is the personal ego, which compels the man to perform various activities. In the modern society, man performs various activities to satisfy his personal ego. The primary instinct of any living organism is survival. Hence all its activities are directed towards sole purpose of survival and reproduction. Primary objects for survival are to seek

food and protect the self against danger. In the case of human being, his activities are spread widely beyond the horizon of activities for getting food and shelter. Most of his activities are for strengthening his own ego. It is the basic nature of the human being, to show himself superior to his fellow human being. He achieves wealth to prove himself richer than his fellow men. He builds big houses to show his superiority over his neighbors. He gets higher qualifications to show his educational superiority. He achieves power to prove himself stronger than others. This basic instinct is wide spread. All the desires to achieve wealth, status, power etc., are born from the basic instinct of strengthening his ego. He wants to be superior to other in all the fields of life. Internally he feels incomplete in a number of fields of life. He strongly desires to be complete. Most of the desires are born from the feeling of incompleteness. The person, who feels incomplete with respect to wealth, desires to achieve more wealth. The person who feels incomplete in knowledge tends to achieve more knowledge. The person, who feels powerless, desires to achieve more power. The ultimate aim of all these desires is to be complete man.

As per Hindu philosophy, the sense of completeness or incompleteness is the result of self mental projection. One can feel incomplete in spite of getting all the wealth, power and status in life. At the same time another person may have the feeling of completeness despite having few material successes. History reveals that most powerful kings,

in the world were not happy because they were feeling incomplete in spite of having huge wealth and immense power.

Upanishad proclaimed confidently regarding our 'inner self' or 'Atman'. It says that *Atman* is the projection of *Brahman*. *Brahman* is the universal live-force. And *Atman* is the individual life force. As *Brahman* is supposed to be complete by itself, its own projection *Atman* is also complete. Now each living organism is nothing but *Atman*. *Atman* is immortal, unborn, and unalterable. Unalterable means that one can not change its quality and quantity. Its shape can not be changed. It can not be made bigger or smaller. It means it is complete by itself. Hence it is logically proved that **Atman is complete**. So each organism including man is complete in itself. God or the Creator has made each organism complete. For example, when a child is born it is full of life. A child is very happy as it is living in the domain of completeness. As the child grows up the seeds of new desires and expectations are sown. And over a period of time as this child grows into an adult it ventures into the domain of incompleteness.

Most of the people are not aware of this nature of completeness of self. The sense of incompleteness is the root cause of their unhappiness. When the person discovers the nature of completeness of self, he attains permanent happiness. Then nothing is left for him to achieve. His mind achieves the stage of desirelessness. He enjoys his existence as a

complete man. This sense of completeness can be achieved through regular and constant practice of meditation.

10] Meditation - the process to realize pure self

As per the Hindu philosophy, human body is the combination of three main layers. Outer which is made up of skin, muscles, bone, organs, which can be seen by the naked eye, is called as the physical self. The second layer is the mind which is made of ego, feeling of I-ness, memory, intelligence, analytical power, creative power, etc; is the seat of all emotions, feelings and thoughts. It is known as the inner self. It can not be seen as it is subtle. It can be felt. All the feelings of pleasure, sorrow, joy, happiness, unhappiness, etc. can be felt at this place. The third, more subtle is the pure-self or *Atman*. It is the pure living force. One can not survive without this living force. It gives vital energy to inner and physical self. It is considered as unborn and immortal. At the time of death, it leaves the physical body. It being pure, no feelings can be felt at this level. At this level there is no pleasure or displeasure. There is no joy and there is no sorrow. There is neither happiness nor unhappiness. It is the pure live force.

It is presumed that the mind or the inner-self is in constant contact with the physical self. Because of that attachment, it remains in contact with whole external world, through various sense organs. With

the result various emotional mental turbulences are created. Such turbulences can create waves of joy and happiness or it can create waves of sadness and unhappiness. Human mind all the time moves between two points of happiness and unhappiness like a pendulum. But when the same mind or the inner-self comes in the contact of the pure-self, it connects itself with the pure self. The pure self is the live force. It is steady and quiet. There are no turbulences. There are no emotional disturbances. It is like the quiet water of the lake. So when the mind connects itself with the pure-self, it takes up the characters of the pure-self; and it becomes calm, quiet and free from mental turbulence. All the desires and all the expectations are dropped automatically, because there is no ego, which can be strengthened. It automatically becomes egoless. This is the stage of quietude and bliss. This can be achieved by regular and continuous practice of meditation.

11] Ultimate aim of meditation is ecstasy, mukti, and Moksha.

Ecstasy is the state of intense joy and delight. It is the state of emotion, so intense that one is carried beyond thoughts. It is the state of thoughtlessness and egolessness. In this state one feels liberated from all worldly bondages. One gets the feeling that his body is weightless and he is free to fly in the whole universe. He feels that all his worldly attachments are broken. He is independent, he is

liberated. His *atman* is free from the cage of the physical body and free to merge with the universal live force or to merge with Mother Nature or almighty the God, that is, the water of the small rivulet is now free to merge with the Great Ocean. Now there is no sorrow, no sadness, no desire, no attachment, no fear, no happiness and no unhappiness. Thus he realizes the true nature of his *Atman*. He realizes that he is not the physical body but he is only the *pure-self* or *Atman*. Now there is no fear of death. This is known as ‘*mukti*’ or ‘*moksha*’. In the eyes of *Patanjali*, it is called “*Kaivalya*”. This is the ultimate stage to be achieved by each human being. This is the ultimate aim of life for each individual. And this can be achieved through constant and regular practice of yoga and meditation.

12] Theory of Meditation

Meditation is the process of training, taming and transforming the mind for the purpose of achieving higher mental status. Human mind has a high potential capacity. It can perform highly complicated and sophisticated tasks. But most of the time, most of the people hardly utilizes 20% of the mental capacity. Eighty percent of mental capacity remains unutilized by the normal human being. It is possible to expand utilization of the mental power by the process of meditation.

Meditation is the process of remolding and reshaping the mind. But the person who wants to

remold his mind should have a definite vision of final mold. One should have clear and sharp idea regarding the final objective one desires to achieve with the help of meditation.

The process of meditation can be utilized for various purposes such for, Relieving mental stress; Acquiring and strengthening positive characters like stability integrity; rationality, fearlessness and compassion; Removing negative characters like desire, attachment, anger, fear, greed, vengeance etc. Expanding mental capacity like memory, intelligence, creativity and receptivity; achieving the stage of mental peace and quietude; attaining spiritual success by realizing pure-self.

Those who are eager to engage in the practice of meditation may have varied aims of life. The technique of meditation may vary from person to person. The technique which is suitable for one person may not be suitable for another person. The techniques of meditation depend upon selected aim, basic mental capacity and mental attitude.

One who desires to develop one's mental capacity should be aware of basic characters of the mind. Most of the time mind grows and develops by itself. As such the mind is always in the process of development. Each individual mind learns and gains the knowledge of various subjects everyday. But most of the time the knowledge gain is not useful. The person who intends to train and tame his mind

as per his own objective should know the basic characters of the mind. These basic characters are

1] The mind should be calm and quiet. Only calm and quiet mind can think deeply, can analyze the problems and can create new ideas.

2] The person should be aware of his positive and negative characters. Awareness helps the mind to strengthen positive characters and to drop negative characters.

3] The mind should be pure, clean and devoid of prejudices. Only clean and pure mind can imbibe new ideas.

4] The person should have the capacity to concentrate on specific subject. Only with concentration one can reach to the depth of the subject and can understand it.

5] One should have fixed and specific objective to be achieved.

The process of meditation provides appropriate environment and fulfills all the pre-requisites for the development and growth of the mind. The basic concept of meditation is to provide rest, relaxation and quietude to the mind. Restful and relaxed mind shall act as a fertile soil for the mind to grow and develop by itself. In addition it trains the mind for concentration and enhances the awareness of the mind.

13] How meditation helps maximizing mental capacity?

As such meditation is a very simple process, even though it is claimed to achieve amazing results. One may get baffled, as to how such a simple procedure can produce such remarkable results. Basically human mind is a very complicated and complex entity. It has a huge potential to develop different faculties like memory, intelligence, creativity and receptivity. But in routine environment, the mind is not able to develop these qualities to its fullest potential. This is because most of the time, the human mind remains occupied in the most trifling matters. Most of its energy and time is dissipated and wasted for unimportant and irrelevant tasks. The common day to day tasks can be performed by comparatively lower and ordinary mental faculty of the mind. Highly evolved and complicated mental faculties are never utilized, because it is not required in solving trifling problems of life. This is like employing a very efficient scientist for the work of performing routine laboratory tests. In this case, the employer is unaware of the capacities of the scientist and utilizes him as an ordinary laboratory technician. With the result all the research capabilities of the scientists remain unutilized. In the same way most of the people are not aware of their own mental capacities with the result this capacity remains unutilized and untapped.

If the person desires to utilize his untapped mental capacities, then he must withdraw his mind from the routine ordinary tasks.

Chit-shuddhi:

Most of the people collect numerous unwanted and unnecessary data in their minds. Their memory section of the mind is full of vast and varied data. Most of this data is not useful and not required. This data not only occupies a big section of the memory space in the mind but it also pollutes the mind. This space can be utilized for storing more useful and valuable data. Since birth, the mind starts collecting information and starts storing this information in the memory box. All the past actions and events are stored as memory. Also the mind has a tendency to stamp each event in the memory, as either good or bad. This is true for all the memory files. For example if the person had a bad experience from his neighbor in the past, his mind will stamp the whole class of neighbors as bad neighbors. If somebody has been cheated by a gold-smith, he will carry the impression that all the gold-smiths are dishonest. Such an impression creates wrong prejudices towards certain persons, castes, religions or objects. And hence such prejudices will affect adversely the judicial thinking of a person. A prejudiced mind will lose the capacity for right perception. A wrong perception will create a wrong concept which ultimately leads to wrong judgment and wrong decisions.

In yogic terms, it is presumed that such a collection of data of past events is stored in *Karmashaya*. It is also presumed that the result of each action or Karma is the resultant outcome of the nature of past action. Hence each person gets the rewards as per his actions. Bad action brings bad results and good action brings good results. All the future actions of the person are guided by this *Karmashaya*, that is, by his previous actions. The person, who does not trust his friends, will never get a trustworthy friend in his life time. The person who is in the habit of cheating others will always be surrounded by people who shall cheat him. At the same time the person who is honest, will be always surrounded by honest people. He will be respected in the society for his honesty.

So the first step in the process of mental growth is to clean the unwanted garbage from the mind. In order to throw all this undesirable trash from the mind, one should remove all the prejudices from the mind. This cleaning process is called as '*chit-suddhi*'. The process of *chit-sudhi* will wipe out all the prejudices and misconceptions from the mind. The mind will become more receptive and open. Only a pure and an uncontaminated mind can easily grasp and comprehend new ideas and knowledge.

Mental Concentration

The second factor, which is hindrance to the mental development, is the wandering and restless nature of the mind and the inability to concentrate on a

specific subject for longer period of time. Most of the time mind wanders aimlessly in different directions. At a given point of time it thinks regarding one subject and at another point of time it jumps on another subject. For example, one's mind might start thinking regarding one's own health. From this subject, it may jump to the costly medical care, from here it may jump to the bad hospital management; from here again it may think of the subject of lethargy and indifference of the government servants and ultimately from here the another chain of thoughts may sprout regarding the bad government or the latest selfish move of the ruling party. This is the usual habit of the mind. It wanders here and there aimlessly and purposelessly.

For solving any problem one has to reach to the source of the problem. This can be done only with mental concentration. Lack of concentration will not help the mind to solve any complicated problems or to perform any complicated research work.

The third obstacle for the human mental development is its pre-occupation in receiving constant flow of information through various sensory organs. The human mind is all the time busy receiving different types of information from the outside world. The mind is involved with various objects of the outside world, through its various sense organs. Hence through the eye it gets visual information, through the ears it gets auditory information, through skin it gets tactile information, and the nose gives one the information regarding

different smells and tongue gives one information regarding different tastes. With the result the mind remains completely occupied in receiving, analyzing, storing and filing all the information received through the sensory organs. No time is left for tapping and utilizing the higher faculties of mind.

The fourth obstacle in the development of the mind is its mental turbulence. Most of the time mind is disturbed. It never remains calm and quiet. Mental turbulences are created by the different types of feelings and emotions. Emotions like love, hatred, desires, expectations, revenge, jealousy, greed, ego etc. are mostly responsible for creating mental turbulences. Sometimes such emotions are so deep rooted, that it will not allow the mind to think about any other subject. Most of the people spend most of their time and energy for nurturing their emotions. Their mind is never quiet and free from emotions. Their mental energy will be wasted for cultivating and rearing their emotions.

In short, the main hindrances for the development of the mental capacities are:-

A] Unawareness of the person regarding his own mental capacity and dissipation of the mental energies for trifle matters.

B] Inability to concentrate due to the wandering nature of the mind

C] Pre-occupation of the mind with varied information received through sensory organs

D] Mental turbulence by various emotional factors.

All these four factors which are obstacles to mental development can be taken care of by the process of meditation.

14] Process of Meditation

Meditation helps in clearing the mind of all the obstacles which hinders the growth and development of the mental capacity. With the practice of meditation, one gets opportunity to enter into the depth of his own mind and explore the hidden capacities of the mind. The person, who is on the surface of water, will not get the idea of the depth of sea. Only the diver can get the exact idea of the depth and vastness of the sea. In the same way an ordinary person will not be in a position to recognize the capacities and the capabilities of his own mind, until he has endeavored to venture into its domain. Once the inward journey starts, the person starts becoming aware of his own mental capabilities.

The technique of concentration is the prerequisite for meditation. In the yogic terms, it is known as *Dharana*.

Dharna

As per the opinion of *Shree Patanjali*, *Dharana* is the process of totally focusing the mind on a specific subject. Hence the ability to concentrate the mind on one subject for a longer time is called as *Dharana*. The inherent nature of an ordinary mind is to wander and to jump from one subject to another. With practice and repeated efforts, one can learn to concentrate on one subject. This can be practiced not only during meditation but during the ordinary routine work of life. One can develop the ability to concentrate when doing routine activities such as eating, reading, playing, or even during watching movie or TV.

For understanding any subject or for analyzing any problem one has to concentrate on the subject or problems. It is very difficult to reach to the core of the problems without concentration. Meditation is a technique for training the mind. One can not meditate on any subject without the ability to concentrate.

Those who have developed the ability to concentrate are successful people in life. A student appearing for an exam has to concentrate on the subject that he is preparing for. Any subject read without concentration will not be understood properly. **Concentration is the process of connecting the mind to a particular subject for longer duration of time.** It is comparatively easier to concentrate on the subjects that are of one's choice and interest. If

a person is interested in a particular game, he will play the same with full concentration. The person, who is fond of reading detective novels, will be reading such novels with concentration. But the same person can not concentrate his mind while reading philosophical essays as this not the subject of his choice and interest. One can improve one's ability to concentrate by regular and repeated practice. In the beginning one should start the practice for concentration by picking the subjects of his interest. Such subjects may be subjects like reading a favorite novel, listening to one's favorite music, playing games etc. Once one gets ability to concentrate on the subject of interest, one can try to concentrate the mind on other important subjects and problems.

The second method for developing mental ability of concentration is to concentrate on sense organs. One can sit in an apparently silent room. Close the eyes and try to hear the smallest perceptible sound. That sound can be the tick-tick of a watch, or it can be the humming of some insect, or it can be the singing of a bird. In the same way one may practice to feel the lighter sensations felt by the skin such as the feeling the air or the clothes touching the skin. Also to develop and sharpen the visual sense one must try to observe the minute details of any subject. Gradually one will develop the ability for concentration. There are certain games which require high degree of concentration. The most suitable game is game of chess. The player of chess has to concentrate deeply, in the each move of his

opponent and then think about his response. Playing the game of chess will be helpful for the process of concentration. Once the mind gets trained in the technique of concentration, it will be easier for the mind to practice meditation.

Pratyahar

The second pre-requisite for the meditation is ability of the mind to enter into its own subconscious level. Most of the time the mind is busy knowing, analyzing, and enjoying the world through the various sense organs. These sense organs are the five paths through which human mind get connected with outside world. With the result the mind never gets time to look into its own subconscious level. Technique of withdrawing the sense organs from the objects is known as *pratyahar* in yogic terms. Practice of *pratyahar* trains the mind for willfully withdrawing it from outside world.

It is presumed that when the mind gets connected with the external world or the subjects of the external world it also gets affected by it. The impressions of the external world, not only distract the mind from meditation but it also creates mental turbulences which further disturbs mental peace.

The best way is to withdraw the sense organs from outside objects. This process is known as *Pratyahar* in the yogic terms. It is a known fact that the person gets all the information of the outside world, through his various sense organs, and his mind remains constantly busy collecting this information,

analyzing it and filing it properly, to keep the same in the memory section of his mind. The connection of the mind with outer subjects creates lots of mental turbulences. The information gathered by the mind may be pleasurable or non-pleasurable. Accordingly it may create mental turbulences of either joy or sorrow. For example if listening to a good music, may be enjoyable, but hearing noises may be stressful; or the sight of a garden may give one a sense of pleasure, while observing a dead body on the ground may give a different feeling. Such mental turbulences are harmful for the mental peace and subsequently for the mental development. Such mental turbulences are also obstacles to the process of concentration. So it is mandatory to withdraw mind from all the external objects before starting meditation. In the process of meditation one has to sit quietly in a separate silent room and the eyes must be kept closed. Sitting in a quiet room with closed eyes will create the situation of *Pratyahar*. Automatically his senses will be withdrawn from the outside objects. As the eyes are closed, so visual information is not received by the mind. The person has selected the room which is silent, so auditory information will also not reach the mind. In the same way smell, taste and touch sensations are also reduced to the minimum level as the person is not doing any activity to encourage taste, smell or touch sensations.

In the beginning one has to forcibly close all the doors through which such information reach

normally to the mind. But gradually with the practice of meditation, one learns how to disassociate the mind from the sensory organs. Normally the sensory organs are functional only when the mind is connected with it. For example the person is passing on the road, his eyes are open, but his mind is completely engrossed in the thought of some past event. His mind may be busy thinking about his hardship in service, or rebuke received by him from his boss for making some gross mistake. Now at the same time, one of his friends is coming from opposite side of the road. His eyes are open. So the eyes can see the image of his friend's figure but because his mind is deeply engrossed in some other thought, and because his mind is not functionally connected with the eyes, the visual impression will not be registered on the mental screen. With the result, he will not wakefully notice the presence of his friend on the road. This is because his mental attention is not towards the friend, but it is towards some other thoughts. In the same way when the person is deeply engrossed in reading some interesting book, he will not hear any music played on the radio in the next room.

It is the rule that the sense organs can be only effective when the mind is associated with it. The same principal can be utilized in deep meditation. In the beginning one has to close the doors of all the sense organs, to stop the mind from getting distracted. But once one knows the technique of meditation, one learns the technique of concentration, and he subsequently gets mastery in

the technique of disconnecting his mind from the outside world and connecting it to the subject of his choice. And henceforth he is not required to intentionally close the doors of his sense organs. Such a person can meditate peacefully without any distraction under all circumstances. He can meditate even on the railway platform.

Sakshibhava

The greatest disturbance in the process of mental development is mental turmoil and turbulences. Human mind is never quiet and peaceful. It gets agitated by various factors like injury to personal ego, unmet expectations, and unfulfilled desires. It can also get disturbed by the uncontrolled emotional outbursts of the mind. Emotions like love, hatred, fear, jealousy, anger, greed, etc can disturb the tranquility of the mind. An agitated mind can not meditate properly, so one has to learn to control his emotions. This can be achieved through awareness towards the self. One has to learn how to disassociate the mind from such events. In yogic term it is called '*Sakshibhava*'. '*Sakshibhava*' is to be the witness of one's own life events without being emotionally involved with it. One has to be a neutral spectator of each event. One has to look towards the life as a neutral and an unattached onlooker. The person watching the drama never gets emotionally upset by the misery of the hero because he is aware that this is the drama and he is not the part of drama but he is only spectator of the drama. In the

same way, as per Hindu philosophy, one has to develop *Sakshibhava* towards all the events of life. One should not emotionally attach himself with any event. This practice of *Sakshibhava* is very difficult to put into practice. But awareness towards the self and deep understanding of the futility of various emotional attachments can gradually bring that feeling of *Sakshibhava*.

Dharana and Dhyana

When the process of concentration is gross in nature, it is known as *Dharana*. When the same process becomes more subtle, it is known as *Dhyana*. When the mind selects one subject for the purpose of concentration, it is known as *Dharana*. In the beginning the mind is connected to the subject through one of the sense organs. As such there is an invisible link between the subject and the mind. After establishing the link, the mind starts analyzing the subject; the mind enters into the deeper core of the subject. Attaching the mind to the subject is known as *Dharana* and entering into the deeper core of the subject, is known as *Dhyana*. For example out of several books, selecting a single book for reading is known as *Dharana*. But when the person starts reading the book and he is totally absorbed in the contents of the book and he becomes one with the literature of the book he enters into the phase of *Dhyana*. Hence becoming one with the subject is known as *Dhyana*. When one starts the process of meditation, it is *dharana*. In the beginning the mind

and the subject of concentration are two separate entities. With deeper concentration the mind gradually loses its separate entity. The mind gets lost in the subject. In simple words it becomes one with the subject. Now there is only one entity and that is mind and the subject in unison. This is the stage of *dhyān*. When one listens to a selected melody of music is *dharana*. But when the listener becomes one with the music, and when he forgets all his surroundings and even himself, when his own entity is dissolved in the music, it becomes *Dhyān*.

Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyān, Samadhi- one continuous process

The first thing one learns through the process of meditation is the ability to concentrate. In the Sanskrit language word for meditation is *Dhyān*. '*Dhyān*' means contemplation, paying attention to a specific object. In the practice of *Dhyān* one starts withdrawing his attention from the outside world and starts drawing his attention towards the internal mental faculties. In the beginning the practitioner of meditation is asked to close the eyes and start paying attention to some imaginary object, deity or event. In the beginning one can not concentrate for a longer period, but gradually one gets habituated to keep his mind on a particular subject for longer period of time.

In book of *Rajyog*, Acharya Patanjali has advocated four steps for the ultimate goal of reaching to the stage *Kaivalya*. These four steps are scientifically

arranged in such a way that it gradually takes the mind to the final stage of ecstasy. These four steps are *Pratyahar*, *Dharana*, *Dhyan* and *Samadhi*. In the first step of *pratyahar*, the mind withdraws his attention from the out side world, by breaking its attachment with the sensory organs. In the second step of *dharana*, it selects one subject for the purpose of meditation. In the third step of *dhyan*, the mind becomes one with the subject. In the final stage, there is no mind and there is no subject, there is only nothingness. In this stage, the mind dissolves it self into nothingness. When there is no mind, then there is no ego. With the loss of ego, the person becomes absolutely free. He is *Mukta*. He attains the stage of *Kaivalya*.

15] Basic concept of Meditation

Meditation is the process of training, taming and transforming the mind, with the ultimate goal of achieving mental quietude, peace and bliss. Thoughtlessness, timelessness and egolessness are the ultimate objectives of meditation. Now how can one achieve these objectives?

Different schools of thought have advocated different methods of meditation. Somebody has advocated, imagining the figure of one's favorite deity and meditating on the same. As per the *Kundlini Yoga's* opinion one can meditate on a '*chakra*' known as '*Muladhar*' and from their one has to shift the focus of concentration to the different charkas or centers

of the body ultimately taking it to the final *chakra* in the mind called as '*Sahastrar*'.

As per the opinion of Buddhism, meditation is witnessing the event with total awareness. Meditation means awareness. And whatever action performed with awareness is meditation. In some schools, the students are taught to perform all their duties with full awareness. When they take bath, they take it with full awareness and when they eat, they eat the food with full awareness. As such most of the works are done, without total awareness to it. When one eats his food, he either tries to listen to the radio or watch TV or read a news paper. His attention is never towards the act of eating. With the result, neither he can enjoy eating, nor can he enjoy TV. When he walks on the road, he is not aware of his action of walking; his legs are automatically doing the act of walking, while his mind may be busy thinking of some other subjects. With the result the action of walking can not be enjoyed fully. Listening to music with full attention and with awareness is meditation. Drawing a picture with total awareness is meditation. Reading book with total engrossment is also an example of meditation.

The ultimate goal of meditation is thoughtlessness. Meditation is the process of disintegration of the mind. Meditation means mindlessness. As such meditation is the act of doing nothing. Meditation means stopping all the activities of the mind. In fact

mind is nothing but a collection of thoughts and emotions. As far as thoughts and emotions persist, mind exists. But when there is no thought, no emotion, there is no mind. The stopping of all mental activities is meditation. But it is not as simple as it looks. Human mind is not like a machine. The activity of a machine can be stopped by the simple action of switching of the push button. If a fan is moving or if the TV is on, it can be stopped by switching off the push button. But there is no 'off' button in the mind which can stop all the activities of the mind. Right from the birth the mind is conditioned to think on various subjects. Mind is conditioned to respond with emotions to different life events. The thoughts and the emotions can not be stopped voluntarily. The mental activities can not be switched off like a machine. One has to learn the technique of stopping all the mental activities voluntarily. The technique of stopping all the mental activities is meditation. All the different methods advocated by the different schools of thoughts for meditation, are in real practice, techniques for stopping various mental activities.

A person tries various methods for meditation with the expectation of achieving something. He performs and practices one technique for a few days and then he complains that the process advocated is useless because nothing happens to him in meditation. As such he has heard or read somewhere, about meditation. But he has never understood the real meaning of meditation. He has

read that when a person meditates, he gets unthinkable joy, he can see the images of the deity, he can see various lights or he can hear divine music. The person meditating, all the time expects to see the image of his favorite deity, colorful lights or divine music. Once there is an expectation in the mind for some future event, the mind gets busy. Expectation of anything makes the mind busy. So such persons make their mind busy with expectations of some divine event to happen. With the result, the basic concept of meditation is lost. Instead of making his mind action-free, he engages his mind in the activity of expectations of the divine event. Such a person can never reach to the ultimate goal of meditation. **As such meditation is doing nothing.**

Zen is the sect popular in China. In Zen school much emphasis is put on effortlessness. The master asks his disciples 'Just to sit, and not do anything'. Someone may ask the question that if meditation is doing nothing, then why, so many different methods are advocated for meditation. As such all these methods advocated, are to systematically train the mind so that it learns the true yogic method to reach to the stage of complete inactivity.

Acharya Patanjali has advocated a systematic and a scientific technique for training the mind, in his book of "Yoga-sutra". As per his opinion, there are eight steps for achieving the final state of '*Kaivalya*' or '*Samadhi*'. *Kaivailya* means mere feeling of pure-

self. He has advocated eight steps. These are *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *pratyahar*, *dharana*, *dhyān* and *Samadhi*. The first four steps are for preparing and training the physical body. The last four steps are for training the mind.

16] Stages of Meditation

With the practice of *Dhyān*, the mind learns to move inward. In the initial phase of meditation the mind roams in the conscious part. One may remember the past, one may remember the relations, and one may remember the family members or friends. One may remember the material world. After some time the mind gets tired of remembering the same subjects, so it tries to enter into the deeper layer of its own sphere. The person sitting in meditation starts, analyzing his own nature. He visualizes his good and bad characters. Not only he visualizes it, he starts analyzing it. As such the basic nature of the mind is to progress, to grow, to develop and to evolve. The natural instinct of the mind is to progress towards positivism.

Nobody likes to have bad characters. Nobody likes to be egoistic or greedy; nobody likes to be fearful by nature. No body likes to be dishonest or violent. Nobody likes to be jealous. All these negative characters are flourished, because the person is not aware of it. All these negative characters are lying in the subconscious strata of the mind. Most of the time those negative characters can not come out on

the surface, because it is controlled by intelligence or '*Buddhi*'. But in certain moments, the '*Buddhi*' loses the control and the negative character gets a chance to come on the surface. It is very difficult to be angry, with conscious awareness towards it. When a person starts taking any sedative drug or alcohol, the drug or alcohol affects first in the upper layer of mind i.e. *Buddhi*. The sedative effect of the drug or alcohol reduces the efficiency of *Buddhi*. With the effect, it loses control over the other negative characters lying deep in the mind. With the effect those negative characters take over the control of the body. Such a person can easily get angry, he can show his egoistic attitude or he may start behaving like a wild animal. Once the effect of alcohol is gone, and once he regains his consciousness, he realizes that he has misbehaved, and then he regrets and repents of his misbehavior. This shows that basically nobody likes to possess negative characters. But they are unable to control those negative feelings because they lack strong determination or they are unaware of it.

In meditation mind travels to the deeper layer of consciousness. There it clearly visualizes its negative characters lying over there. Now it gets chance to analyze those character. He becomes aware of his own negative characters. The moment mind becomes aware of negative characters, they disappear automatically.

With the disappearance of negative characters, positive characters get a chance to grow freely. In the absence of fear, fearlessness grows, in absence of violence, non-violence grows. In absence of hatred love grows. In absence of attachment, sense of dis-attachment grows. In absence of anger, calmness grows. Now the mind becomes more calm and peaceful. Now there is no flow of emotions to create mental turbulences. Now only one sense prevails and that is the sense of I-ness. It is called 'Asmita' in Sanskrit language. *Asmita* means pure sense of I-ness. The person realizes that he is alone in the whole world. All his senses of my-ness were delusory. All his cravings and desires for getting material gain are not going to give him any real peace of mind. Now there persists only a pure sense of I-ness.

But this is not the end. Still he has deep love for his physical body. He is attached with the physical body right from the birth. The physical body is gross. The mind is subtle. And Atman is subtler. Physical body is not immortal. As per the opinion of *Gita*, those who are born are bound to die. So the physical body will not exist after death. Only the Atman is considered as immortal. Atman is not born, and it will not die. It is eternal. At the time of death the Atman leaves the old body and enters into the new one, just as the person would remove the old clothes and put on new clothes. As one goes deeper into the subconscious level during meditation the mind starts getting the sense of detachment

from the physical body. He realizes that he is not the physical body but his real nature is Atman i.e. pure-self. The moment, the mind awakens from this long slumber of delusion, its attachment with physical body is broken. Now he is free. Now he has no fear of death because the Atman never dies.

Atman is immortal, indestructible, and unchangeable. As per opinion of *Gita*, no weapon can kill it, no fire can burn it, and no water can drown it. It is the pure live force. It is the part of *Brahma* or the universal live force. Atman is unchangeable, so it implies that Atman is complete in itself. Nothing can be added to it, or nothing can be removed from it. It is complete or '*Purna*'. The final realization in the process of meditation is the sense of completeness or '*Purnatva*'. Being complete, there is no desire left to add anything. Now the person becomes desire less. Now the sense of I-ness also dissolves. The person realizes that he is not a separate entity but he is part of *Brahma*, the universal live force. The wave of water is not separate from the ocean. It itself is the ocean. Now he realizes that he is not separate from God, the almighty. He is the part of God. In other words, he himself is God. The sense of separation from God is called *Dwait*. Now that sense also disappears. Now he realizes oneness with God, that is, *Advait*.

This is known as 'Mukti', 'Moksha', or 'Kaivalya'. This is the ultimate goal of life.

17] Methods of Meditation:

Various methods of meditations are advocated by different schools of thoughts. *Acharya Rajneesh* advocated dynamic meditation. Dynamic meditation is a modified combination of *Kapalbhati and Dhyana*. The practitioner is asked to do deep and fast breathing for ten minutes. Then he is supposed to follow his body movements. He can dance, jump, and sing etc. for ten minutes. Then he relaxes completely and automatically enters into the stage of trance.

Mahesh Yogi has advocated Transcendental meditation. In transcendental Meditation, one has to sit comfortably and then start mental recitation of some specific mantra. This is called as 'Mantra Jap'. This will be followed by *Dhyana*.

Shri Rohit Mehta suggested that one may imagine some pleasant event, and then can meditate on the same. Some people advocate concentrating on the tip of nose while meditating. Some people advise to meditate on the picture of one's favorite deity. As per the *Kundlini Yoga's* opinion one can meditate on a '*chakra*' known as '*Muladhar*' and from there one has to shift the focus of concentration to the different charkas or centers of the body ultimately taking it to the final *chakra* in the mind called as '*Sahasrara*'.

The main objective of meditation is to calm down the mind, and to bring the mind to a level of complete quietude so that all the mental turbulences will disappear. This can be achieved by controlling all the thoughts and emotions. *Acharya Patanjali* has said that yoga means control of '*Chittavruti*'. *Chittavruti* is the word from Sanskrit language. *Chittavruti* in the wider sense is the group of all desires, all expectations, and all emotions. As per the opinion of *Patanjali*, most of the mental turbulences are due to thoughts connected to past events, or future desires, or outburst of emotions which are generated from various attachments. These mental turbulences can cause a sense of happiness or unhappiness, sense of joy or sorrow, sense of pleasure or displeasure. Ultimately the outcome of such mental turbulences is mental disturbance and loss of mental peace. So if all *chittavrutis* are controlled, one can automatically achieve mental peace. For that he has advocated the eight steps to be followed, that is, *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *Samadhi*. In his opinion, it is not possible to pacify the mind by simply adopting one method. Most of the people are under the wrong impression that, one can sit for meditation for a few minutes everyday and can achieve the results.

Meditation alone will not be effective for achieving the final goal of bliss and serenity. One has to change total life style for the same. One has to adopt the rules and regulations advocated by *Shree*

Patanjali. The person, who is not honest with his friends and relatives, can not be honest with himself. There will not be harmony between his thoughts, speech and action. And absence of harmony will create internal mental conflict and loss of natural balance between the mind and the body. Such a person may not achieve any result even though he sits for meditation for hours every day. In the same way those who are not adopting non-violence or '*Ahimsa*', will be nurturing the internal feeling of hatred. Such a hateful mind can not achieve peace or bliss. So it is imperative for the person to change his life style, and his way of thinking. He has to minimize his negative characters and try to maximize his positive characters.

Change of life style and adopting positive attitude will prepare the mind for the last step for meditation. Keeping all these objectives and factors in mind one can select his own method of meditation. One method of meditation maybe suitable to one person but it may not be suitable to another person because everybody's mental make up and attitude is different.

Music and Meditation:

Music is an example of a high quality meditation. Music and meditation can go well together. About this *Acharya Rajneesh* has mentioned "To me music and meditation are two aspects of the same

phenomenon. Without music, meditation is little dull and unlived. And without meditation music is simply noise”.

Music, specifically Indian classical music, affects the mind deeply and profoundly. Indian ragas are scientifically prepared. Each Raga has different effects on the mind. Most of the ragas are meant for calming the mind and for giving divine pleasure to the mind. For enjoying Indian classical music, one has to understand the basic science of Indian music. Indian music is generated from *Samveda*. *Samveda* is the original religious book, which contains complete knowledge and technique regarding all the fine arts, especially for dance and music.

Those who can understand and enjoy Indian classical music can meditate on the same. Sit in calm and secluded room, and start playing Indian classical music and listen to it attentively. Gradually the music will take you to the stage of deep mental calmness, peace and joy. Those who can sing classical music are more fortunate. Singing classical music serves the purpose of *pranayama*, and meditation. One has to control breathing while practicing and singing Indian classical music. When singing one has to sing a number of different tunes or ‘sur’ which require systematic control of your breathing. This practice of singing various tunes in different ragas for a longer period of time is the *Rechak* part of *pranayam*. Gradually the musician gets practice, for lengthening the ‘sur’ for a number

of seconds or *matras*. With continuous practice one can lengthen the same 'Sur' unto 25, 30 or 40 seconds.

In the same way while singing, one has to be very particular and specific regarding *raga*, *bandish*, *tal*, *matras*, *sur*, etc. Good music is the combination of all these factors. One has to be very attentive during practice. In order to produce a good piece of music, the mind has to be completely focused and concentrated and it must not think of any other subject other than music. This situation is the situation of thoughtlessness. At the same time, the singer himself gets absorbed into the melodious lure of music, and he becomes one with the music. He himself is lost in the music. This is egolessness. So in musical practice one can easily get into the stages of thoughtlessness and egolessness, which are the ultimate goals of meditation. This is the reason why music is the best kind of meditation.

As such any action, any activity done with interest, concentration and awareness and oneness with the subject is meditation.

Process of Meditation:

Meditation is to be done, after performing *pranayam*. Hence there is no need for making separate preparations for meditation. Whatever preparations are done for the purpose of *pranayam*, are applicable for meditation.

One should sit in a silent and a comfortable room. Sitting posture can be either *Sukhasana*, or *Siddhasana* or *Padmasana*. One should sit in a comfortably straight posture. If one can not keep the back straight without support, one can take the help of a back support. In the beginning for one or two minutes, one should not do anything. Let the heart rate and the respiratory rate come down to normal. Then one should recite a prayer of one's choice. One can sing this prayer aloud or recite it in the mind. The prayer will be helpful for removing unwanted thoughts from the mind. During prayer, one should have the feeling of complete trust and sense of surrender to God.

After prayer one should perform *Bhramari pranayam* along with recital of OM. (This method is described fully in the chapter of *Pranayam*).

Bhramari pranayam should be followed by meditation. One should keep the eyes closed. And one should remain in the same position. Concentration should be on the respiration. One should feel the air going in and coming out of the nose. If possible start counting the respiratory cycles mentally. Generally in normal circumstances there are 15-18 respiratory cycles in one minute. So if one desires to meditate for 15 minutes then he should count the cycle up to 300 counts. Once the count is over, one should recite a favorite prayer or a *sloka* or else one can only say 'OM-Shanti, Om-

Shanti, Om –Shanti’ and complete thereby the process of meditation. Once the meditation is over, one should sit in the same position for 2-3 minutes and then slowly gets up. This is the complete method of meditation.

To summarize, this process can be divided into the following four stages.

- a) Prayer
- b) *Pranayama* with Omkar recitation
- c) Meditation (doing nothing)
- d) *Sloka* or prayer or shanti mantra.

Factors to be considered during the practice of meditation.

During meditation keep the mind calm and cool. Body and mind should be completely relaxed.

One should not expect that the thought process will be stopped immediately. On the contrary, there will be more thoughts disturbing the mind. One should not try to either stop the thought process or to suppress it. One should allow the thoughts to come and go as they rush to the mind. One should pay no attention to those thoughts. No importance should be given to those thoughts. Thoughts may come and thoughts may go. Just watch them as a neutral witness. One should watch his own thoughts as if one is watching the scene on a cinema screen or a TV screen. If one tries to prevent or control the thoughts, it will create a conflict in the mind. The act of suppression of thoughts itself will hamper the

basic philosophy of meditation. The basic philosophy of meditation is to keep the mind calm and cool. But the act of suppression or controlling the thoughts will create a conflict in the mind. One part of the mind will try to bring the hidden thoughts to the surface while second part of the mind will try to suppress it. So it will create a conflict and ultimately will lead to loss of mental peace. So in short one should not suppress those thoughts, but only watch them as a neutral witness without giving any importance to those thoughts. If no importance is given to those thoughts, it will loose its strength and in the course of time it will disappear.

Be aware of whole physical body and body sensations. One may concentrate on different sensory organs. If one concentrates on ears and audio functions, one may start listening to even the smallest sound. One can hear tick-tick of the watch in the room, one may listen to the voice of some bird, or one may listen to the sound of a vehicle passing on the nearby road, and one may listen to the talk of some person sitting in the next room or next flat. Just listen to it again as neutral witness. In the same way tactile sensations can be felt. With concentration one can feel the beating of one's own heart. One can feel the pulsation on one's own fingers. One can feel the touch of air on the skin. Eyes are closed so there is no possibility of getting any sensation from eyes. But with the closed eyes also one may see different shapes in front of the eyes, just be a witness to all these sensory feeling.

One should never expect any miracle to happen during meditation. Most of the people read a number of books to learn meditation; they also hear the experiences of other people who practice and teach meditation. In many of the books it has been mentioned that during meditation, one listens to divine music, one sees the image of some deity or one sees the different colored lights or a glow of light. With this knowledge in the back of their mind, people expect to experience such miracles happening during their own practice of meditation. Such expectations will disturb the calmness of the mind. Such expectations will again put the mind into action and so it will create mental turmoil. Ultimately nothing will happen and the practitioners will be disappointed due to their failure to experience such miracles. Even if such miracles were to happen they would happen effortlessly when the mind is extremely cool and calm.

Even if one listens to divine music or one sees divine images during meditation, one should not stop at this stage because the ultimate aim of meditation is not to get such divine experiences. These are the *siddhis*, but if one stops his efforts after getting *siddhi*, one will not be in a position to reach to the ultimate goal.

With more and more practice, it will be easier to enter into the depth of meditation. In the beginning one may take 2-3 hours of meditation to reach to the

deeper level of consciousness. But with more practice, that time period will be reduced. After practicing meditation for a longer period of time, one may reach to the same depth of consciousness within 15 minutes.

It may happen that during meditation one may become aware of his own positive and negative characters. The awareness of negative characters, can depress the person. But one should not be afraid to face the realities. If there exists any negative character, it is going to come to the surface of the consciousness during meditation. At that point one should try to analyze it fully. One should try to find out the root cause of these negative characters. One should be aware of the harmful effect of such characters. The moment the mind will realize the worthlessness of such characters, the mind will drop it.

Meditation can be compared with the action of diving into the deep sea. In meditation one dives deep into subconscious level of his mind. In the case of the diver, as he goes deeper into the sea he sees a number of objects. As he goes deeper and deeper he discovers a whole new universe in the deep sea. At the utmost depth of the seabed the diver can get invaluable articles which he has never seen before. In the same way, when the mind starts going deeper and deeper into self consciousness, it meets with a number of thoughts. First and foremost, the negative characters come up in the mind and then he comes

across the positive characters, like love, non-violence, trustworthiness, etc. One should be aware of these characters also. One should not stop at that level. Positive characters are helpful for strengthening the mind but it will not help one to realize the self.

After some time, when the mind delves deeper, there be only a feeling of “I-ness”. There are no negative or positive characters. There are no emotions, feelings or attachments. Only I-consciousness exists at this level. In fact the self simply exists on this plane. At this stage one feels that he is not the body but something other than the body. As such the feeling of I-ness is not attached with the body. It is attached with the mind. So now the mind gets separated from the body. Only feeling of I-ness persists. Now there is no sense of my-ness. Hence the feeling of “my family”, “my relatives”, “my property” or “my prestige” gets dissolved. Even the feeling of “my body” is dissolved. Only the pure feeling of “I” persists. This ‘I’ is without any attachments, and now one becomes aware that one is alone in this world. All the worldly relations are temporary, only “I” is permanent. The worldly relations of family, friends, relatives, property etc. are man-made and it has no impact on the pure “I-ness”. At this stage one realizes the pure image of Atman. One realizes that I am not body but I am pure the live force or Atman.

As per Hindu philosophy even the feeling of pure “I-ness” is even not desirable. It hampers the progress in spirituality. With further practice of meditation, one may reach to the stage, where the feeling of “I-ness” will be lost. At this stage ‘I’ is totally dissolved in the universal force. Once this feeling prevails in the mind, and once the feeling of I-ness dissolves, one reaches the stage of egolessness. Now there exists only a universal vital force. Now I and God are not separate but they are one. Now it occurs to him that he is a part of the universal vital force or ‘*Brahma*’. Once the ‘I’ is dissolved, one gets dis-attached from all the worldly bondages.

Now he is neither happy nor unhappy. Only eternal joy persists. This is the joy of mere existence. This is known as ‘*Mukti*’, or ‘*Moksha*’ or ‘*Kaivalya*’. And this is not only the final aim of meditation but it is actually the ultimate aim of life.

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